HITCH

#8 • AUGUST / SEPTEMBER 1995 • $3.50

Interviews with:

- **Leatherface!**
- **Tommy James!**
- **Some guy from that *Baywatch* show!**

Chiropractors
Exposed!

McDonald's
Fun Facts!

How You Can Be
Hootie & the Blowfish!

The Gabor Sister
Egg Poll!

Almost Nothing on
Batman Forever!

Fast Food HORRORS!

HITCH

DISTRIBUTED LIKE SO MANY POKER CHIPS

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Dedicated to the Memory Of
Elizabeth Montgomery

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HITCH

#8 • AUGUST / SEPTEMBER 1995

"The truth is, I practice absurdity quite religiously."
—Alfred Hitchcock

MAIN FEATURES

A Visit to the Back Quack/8 Chiropractic. The solution is just that plain. A he-man adventure by Rod Lott. **Baywatch's Tazmanian Devil/16** In which a Hasselhoff sidekick contemplates the beguiling nature of curly fries. By Cybil Longfellow. **Fast Food Horrors!/18** True-to-life tales involving everything from burgers and pizza to seafood and tacos. Trust us, you'll want to skip the soup. By Rod Lott. **HITCH's Fall TV Preview/23** Another banner year for the webs. By Steve Hunt. **The McDonalds's FAQ/24** Compiled with care by Kevin M. Hebert. **Face to Face with Leatherface/28** Over a plate of sausage, the *Texas Chainsaw Massacre* star tells all. By Rod Lott. **Crystal Blue Conversation/32** Pop legend Tommy James explains what a Shondell is, and even discusses Tiffany. By Rod Lott.

EVERYTHING ELSE

Heapin' Mailbag/3 Lots o' letters, Yasmine Bleeth and, *hey*, let's picnic! **The Gabor Sister Egg Poll/9** Info you can use: Does Zsa Zsa or Eva like hers over easy? **How to Get Tons o' Chicks/9** You'll thank us later. By Joe Rogers. **The FBI's Fugitive of the Month/10** Another dumb guy. Tired of this feature yet? Tough. **The Robert Goulet Death Watch/10** Ditto, but new and improved. **OKC BBQ DOA/10** You'll laugh, you'll cry...okay, you'll probably just laugh. **It Don't Matter If You're 6 or 5/10** Obligatory Michael Jackson potshots. **STATS/11** Desert Storm may have been swift, but bet these vets can't play tennis. You'll know what we mean, but don't say we didn't warn you. **Hootie-O-Matic/12** If you've ever wanted to strike it rich singing bland pop for yuppies, here's your big chance. By Rod Lott and Steve Hunt. **The Englishman Who Came/12** Obligatory Hugh Grant potshots. **Les Pennick's Smart Computer Shopper Tips/13** Before you buy, remember *Doom II*. By Les Pennick. **Tom Neesnan's Belated Movie Reviews/14** *Screwballs*? Better late than never. By Tom Neesnan. **Feminism '95/15** Quiz yourself. No fair cheating. By Clancy. **Now Ear This/31** Our new music review section, in a pathetic attempt to get free CDs out of record companies. Watch it work. **Videos/34** This installment of our popular, yet generic-titled, section features reviews of a handful of animal attack films and a look at the *Victoria's Secret* cable special. By Rod Lott and Chris Henry. **Reading Material/42** Send us your zines, big or small, and we'll be sure to trash 'em here.

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COVER

Chomp-o-licious fun at your local generic hamburger hut. Art by Brad Lott.

Please send all kindhearted words, acrimonious missives and items for review to Heapin' Mailbag, c/o **HITCH**, *5504 N. Tulsa Avenue, Oklahoma City, OK 73112. Or e-mail us at rlott@aol.com. All mail is subject to extreme ridicule.*

Dear Mr. Lott,

I read about your publication in *Factsheet 5*. I read your article in *F5* and it really hit home, or I should say work. I have quite a setup at my office and have published many zines there. For the smaller runs, I even printed them out on the color printer. Because I am the head of the department (of course, it is easy to have the title "art director" at a company employing 20 people), I really have no "boss" to look out for, so my "real" work never interferes.

One resource used at the office that you overlooked is the mail system. I know some people who outright *steal* postage, especially when there is a meter. I personally have not done that, but I do use the bulk mailing permit of the company (being head of that mailroom is part of my job, too). The company doesn't seem to mind, because they have already spent the money on the permit, they continue to benefit from it and I do all the sorting and pay the postage charges myself. It works great and can save a lot of money if you have more than 200 subscribers. If you do not have that many subscribers now, after the coverage in *F5*, I hope you do.

L.E. McCutcheon
Burbank, CA

Hey Rod—

What's happenin'? Just a note to say congrats on seeing **HITCH** on the *Factsheet 5* "Editor's Choice" page! I'm pretty blown away seeing my mag in there myself! Also liked your article in the same issue.

Your comments on Kinko's were amusing — I work there! It's a drag, but it allows me to do my zine cheap. In fact, I have been working on a "How to Rip Off Kinko's" article for a pal's zine.

Kiss someone you love when you get this letter and make magic. This paper was sent to you for good luck. The original copy is in New England. It has been around the world nine times. The Luck has been sent to you. You will receive good Luck in four days. This is no joke! You will receive it in the mail. Send copies to people that you think need good Luck. Don't send money as fate has no price. Do not keep this letter. It must leave your hands in 96 hours. An Air Force officer received $70,000 in four days. Joe Elliot recieved $40,000 and lost it because he broke the chain. While in the Philippines, Gene Wolfe lost his wife six days after receiving this letter. He failed to circulate the letter. However before her death she had won $50,000 in a lottery. The money was transferred to him four days after he decided to mail out this letter. Please make twenty copies of this letter and see what happens in four days. The chain comes from South Venezuela and was written by Saul Anthony Decroe, a missionary from South America. Since the copy must make a tour of the world, you must make twenty copies and send them to you friends and associates. After a few days you will get a surprise. This is true even though you are not superstitious. So note the following:

Constantine Dems received the chain in 1958. He asked his secretary to make twenty copies and send them out. A few days later he won a lottery of two million dollars.

Andy Doddit, an office employee recieved this letter and forgot it had to leave his hands within 96 hours. He lost his job. Later after finding the letter again he mailed out twenty copies. A few days later he got a better job.

Please send no money. Please don't ignore this. IT DOES WORK!!

Hope all's cool and that you and your loved ones are unscathed by that awful bombing. See ya.

Steve Mandich
Portland, OR

Rod,

Read your piece in the new issue of *Factsheet 5* and liked it a lot. I've been honing my own office skills, especially since things are often not busy at all in my office. I do a literary review zine, and every week, I take along a few chapbooks to review on company time. This society supports banks, exploiters and government assassins, but not writers, so we have to get our support where we can.

Thanks for the article.

Stuart Ross
Carleton, CA

Rod,

A side note on Slim Goodbody ("Biggest Pet Peeves of Slim Goodbody," **HITCH** 6): He actually came to my grammar school when I was in the fifth or sixth grade, and it was the first and last autograph I ever got from a famous person. Imagine my excitement when I saw a picture of him in **HITCH**. Go ahead, imagine it....I'll wait for you.

Regina Hiney
Bayonne, NJ

Rod—

Fucking *loved* **HITCH** 5. Here's $20 for all your back issues.

Jeffrey M. Zinger
Woodstock, Onatrio
Canada

Rod:

Went shopping today and picked up the latest issue of *F5* and, sure enough, there was your article in all it s glory. Good stuff indeed. I especially liked the part about having a boss who is scared of his wife. I thought it was really cool that he put **HITCH** on the "Editor's Choice" page as well. Nothing like free advertising, is there?

Picked up a CD by The Ocean Blue after reading one of your reviews in an earlier issue of **HITCH**. I passed on the David Hasselhoff CD I saw, though.

Despite the fact that David Hasselhoff was on the cover, #6 was easily the best one yet (the cover, I mean). The layout was great and the printers did a better job than normal. However, the same cannot be said for the inside. Many pages had a consistent fading to them that proved rather hard to read at times. But a minor detail that is!

Also, thanks for the Dave diary ("Excerpts from David Hasselhoff's *Baywatch* Diary"). It was great, but I feel he needs

A LETTER FROM THAT ROD GUY

PROCEED WITH CAUTION!

I'm warning you: Those readers eating Ramen noodles while perusing this issue may want to skip over the STATS column for now.

❤ ❤ ❤

BLEETH SCHMEETH

As if Oklahoma City hasn't had more than its fair share of tragedies lately, it recently was blindsided by yet another. Yep, that's right: *Baywatch*'s Yasmine Bleeth reneged on her scheduled June appearance at our local water park.

Bleeth – a name that reminds me of "bleat," which is what sad lambs do – had accepted a tidy sum just to show up and write her name in cursive on a stack of glossies for adoring fans, along with her costar, Jaason Simmons. Unfortunately, she backed out before the big day, claiming it was the opportune time for her instead to promote a new movie of hers.

First of all, *what* movie? Anyone out there seen her "talents" being utilized on celluloid lately? If she's referring to that direct-to-video extended *Baywatch* episode (*Forbidden Paradise*, see **HITCH** 7), she shouldn't have even bothered. No amount of promotion is going to help that flaccid flick. So Jaason came alone (see Cybil Longfellow's report elsewhere in this issue), and I, for one, feel cheated.

Not because I've followed her career or anything, but because it would have filled a page or two in **HITCH**. This wouldn't have been her first trip to OKC, either. My brother's girlfriend Amy works at a radio station here where Bleeth and Simmons came to plug their dumb show last fall. It seems Princess Yasmine became pissed when she was told it would be *10 whole minutes* before the DJs would be ready to interview her on-air. Apparently, they also had mispronounced her name, because as she ordered Amy, "Tell them my name is *Yaz-meen*, *not* Jasmine!"

"Her name is Jasmine, you guys," relayed Amy, not one to take orders from a syndicated starlet.

more harassing in the future. Perhaps a regular feature? Since you were kind enough to fulfill my last wish concering annoying people who need to be ridiculed, have you considered David Geffen? What is up with this guy? Why is everyone so scared shitless of him? I think **HITCH** should start awarding monthly "get over yourself" awards to people such as Mr. Geffen, and the award should be a giant pullout dartboard-style picture of said person for the readers of **HITCH** to impale sharp, pointy projectile objects (a dart ?) at with reckless abandon.

Dwain Henry
St. Mary's, GA

Dear Rod:

HITCH is brilliant, we all love it, it's my envy. It takes a shitload to make me laugh anymore, but you have done it. I felt like a kid with my first issue of *Mad*. I'm spreading **HITCH** around like the Ebola virus, and am showing everyone I think would appreciate it. I will soon be ordering some back issues for friends (especially #5) as soon as I can put my life back together after the end of the semester.

Congratulations on a really original, effective and hilarious magazine, Rod!

John Scariano
Albuquerque, NM

Rod:

As soon as I saw your article in *Factsheet 5* about "on-the-job zineing," I had to write and share my own experience. I've been doing it myself for just about five years now! I work in the advertising department of a "major national retailer" based here in Chicago. While working here, I was lucky enough to hook up with two other people, and we all wanted to get some sort of 'zine going. Our first effort was *Vox Canis*, which lasted about two years as a quarterly. We took a break for a while and then launched into *Chum*, which is taking much longer to do, is much more expensive, but looks a hell of lot better.

I'm also "lucky" enough to work for a company who spares no expense in the computer equipment area, so I've always got state-of-the-art gear at my disposal. I would say at least 25 percent of the people in my department of about 60-70 people are working on some sort of freelance/side projects, using company time and equipment. I don't know anyone else doing a 'zine, but any blood we can squeeze from the corporate stone is worth it. They've certainly squeezed a lot out of us. I've also done a few album/CD covers, newsletters, etc. As an added bonus, I just moved to a different section of the department, where I have a truly cool supervisor who knows exactly what I'm up to, and doesn't mind. I was also brought up with generous amounts of guilt, so I don't usually set aside "real" work for the 'zine, except around deadline time. I also come in for the occasional weekend shift, for scanning/printing binges when no one will be looking over my shoulder.

My job is such that I have days of hell-bent work followed by days of finger-tapping dullness. During production of our last issue, there were two or three such days where I did *nothing* but work on *Chum*. Eight-hour days! I can't even imagine what I would have done if I *didn't* have the 'zine to work on. But I will certainly take advantage of this situation as long as I can.

Please send me a copy of the latest **HITCH**. I'd love to see it. Yours in corporate scamming,

Kathy Moseley
Chicago, IL

Rod –

Never ordered a zine before. Read the "Editor's Choice" review in *Factsheet 5* #55 and would love a copy. Thanks.

Judy Weinstein
Sherman Oaks, CA

Rod,

I am sending this e-mail through work (the temp job) to tell you how much I enjoyed **HITCH**. I really loved the whole dreidel thing, too ("The **HITCH** Dreidel," **HITCH** 4).

Barbara Kligman
New York City, NY

Dear Rod,

HITCH is an inspirational mag for a fellow publisher and one that keeps me going on my own zine. I've felt strongly about **HITCH** from the very first issue I read, and I do tend to read them all the way through (unlike many I recieve). From that very first issue (#2), I knew that **HITCH** was something special, a force to be reckoned with, nay worshipped.

Finally, congratulations on your listing in the "Editor's Choice" section of *Factsheet 5* #55. You must be thrilled. Of course, R. Seth has only reiterated what I have from the very first issue I read: You

should be running the show at a mag like *National Lampoon* that obviously has no talent. Kudos to you and the entire crew at **HITCH**.

Douglas Carroll
Occoquan, VA

Rod,

Planet of the Apes! *Planet of the Apes*!! *Planet of the Apes*!!! Yahooooooooo!

Hey, Rod, just got the new ish (**HITCH** 7). I haven't read it yet, but from what I've read, it looks like another fucking brilliant issue.

John Chilson
San Diego, CA

Dear Rod,

Just wanted to drop you a line and make a few comments about your article in *Factsheet 5* ("Work Schmerk!"). Killer article, great tips and techniques, but I think you overlooked something about Kinko's. Yes, they should be driven out of business; yes, they should be avoided at all costs – as a customer – but did you ever think about it from an employment perspective? You wanna talk about a "branch office"? How 'bout "zinesters' playground"?

I am employed at Kinko's, and you wouldn't believe the scam stories. The pay sucks, the stress sucks, but ohhhhh, the benefits. No less than four employees publish zines at this store, theirs and their friends (oh, I'm writing this on the clock while printing out about a thousand color laser covers for my CD comp). All of us have friends in bands (fliers for cover, beers, whatever) or that own bars (bar tab for fliers). Let's see...there's free long distance to anywhere on the fucking planet, 24-hour faxes, giant-size copies, color copies, etc.

I work in the desktop publishing department, and all I can say is that we have every major software title for publishing and graphics on the fucking planet, and I'm "in charge" here. Access to all the hardware and output goodies that give zine publishers full wood. I don't publish a zine right now – too busy running a freelance graphic operation at work – but I would recommend Kinko's to anyone who needs access from the inside and their current employers aren't cutting it.

Great article, Rod. You were right-on about supporting mom-and-pop copy places. Don't worry about Kinko's being forced out of business; it's rotting from the inside more than they'll ever know!

Slackmotherfucker
San Diego, CA

Thanks, Slack (can I call you Slack?) for the kind words. While working at the evil Kinko's may work to your advantage, doing so would be against my principles, slightly akin to David Duke soliciting contributions for the United Negro College Fund.

Rod,

Got **HITCH** 7 Friday. The He-Man Adventure ("America's Biggest Hole") was a big winner this time, as was the Elders board game ("The Beat-O-Matic")...although I really have no further comment on the latter. Looks like the regular features continue quite nicely. They give the reader good things to look forward to in the next issue.

Chris Henry
Swainsboro, GA

Rod,

Thanks for **HITCH** 7. Great magazine. "Dear Mr. Clipson" (coin pouch) and the He-Man Adventure ("America's Biggest Hole") were hilarious. How do you get so many people to contribute? You don't actually pay them, do you?

Dean Williams
Chicago, IL

Most all the contributors to **HITCH** *are among my dearest, closest friends in all the land. So hell no, I don't pay 'em a cent.*

Rodney,

HITCH looks great. Your design looks about 10 times better than it did. I love being in the Heapin' Mailbag. It's my favorite. I laughed really hard, but I can't remember where or why. The El Chico prank ("Dear Mr. Clipson:") is God's work, and the Grand Canyon spread ("America's Biggest Hole") was really deep. Get it?

Taylor Holland
Austin, TX

Every now and then, yeah.

Dear Rod,

You know, my sister wants to know if your name is really Rod M. Lott, but I'm feeling like maybe you shouldn't tell her.

Grace
Mount Kisco, NY

When she *finally* got on the air, she was all happy-smiley with the DJs, flirting and everything. As she signed pictures for the ogling, understandably horny radio personalities, she told one, "I'm going to sign yours to Oklahoma's #1 groper....How do you spell 'groper'?"

Silly thing is, the girl wasn't kidding. After she left, the men proceeded to crack wise about her "beefiness" and apparent "implants."

Good call, gentlemen.

How dare Yasmine not show up now, just when OKC is beginning to heal! Just when we need her! Just when she was the ointment that would have closed our open wounds! *Yeah, right.*

I mean, sure the brunette is indeed one saucy vixen, a tasty trifler, a sumptuous coquette, a luscious vamp, a voluptuous temptress and perhaps even an Epicurean flirt. (I can see Yasmine running to a dictionary at this point.) And that's her problem. She *knows* it. As one of *People*'s 50 Most Beautiful People this year (and we take issue with that; she's probably more like around #72), she sighed about her fiancé, "He's going to have to look at this face for the rest of his life."

Except when she has big movies to make. Gee, one year she's your average soap-opera supporting throwaway character; the next, she's cavorting seaside as one of David Hasselhoff's nautical sidekick goons. *This* gives her reason to act so darn snooty?

Baywitch.

Hi There!

I read about **HITCH** in *Factsheet 5* and would like a sample copy of #5. I am looking forward to the Robert Goulet interview. I have put your "Work Schmerk!" article up on my office door at work. Gotta love it.

Rodney F. Elin
Washington, D.C.

Howdy Rod,

Saw your review in *Factsheet 5* and gosh darn it! I'll risk the $3.50 and see if **HITCH** can make a real man out of me!

Clay Butler
Capitola, CA

Rod–

Well, I'm *not* at work as I write this, but I could be! I really enjoyed your "Work Schmerk!" article, so true, all true. My bitch boss lady didn't pay me because she couldn't walk the *two feet* to the doorway and fetch my timesheet blatantly displayed on my blank desk, so as a result, my checking account went under zero. (Yes, I'm one of those people that *lives* paycheck to paycheck. I guess she's too rich to understand this fundamental concept of poverty.)

So I owe the bank $36 in overdraft fees. Because of her neglect, I am figuring out how to steal back exactly this amount, as I feel she owes it to me. It's a small office (only three of us, counting her), so downright theft is out of the question. I'll probably just end up using her typewriter, labelmaker and other office machines until I reach the $36 mark, be it stolen time or material objects.

I really like your writing style! Congratulations on "Editor's Choice." I've been repulsed by turtlenecks ("Things I Try to Avoid," **HITCH** 5) for a good six years now. Any kind of constricting neckline is beginning to bother me. I may call it quits on T-shirts soon unless they're adequately stretched.

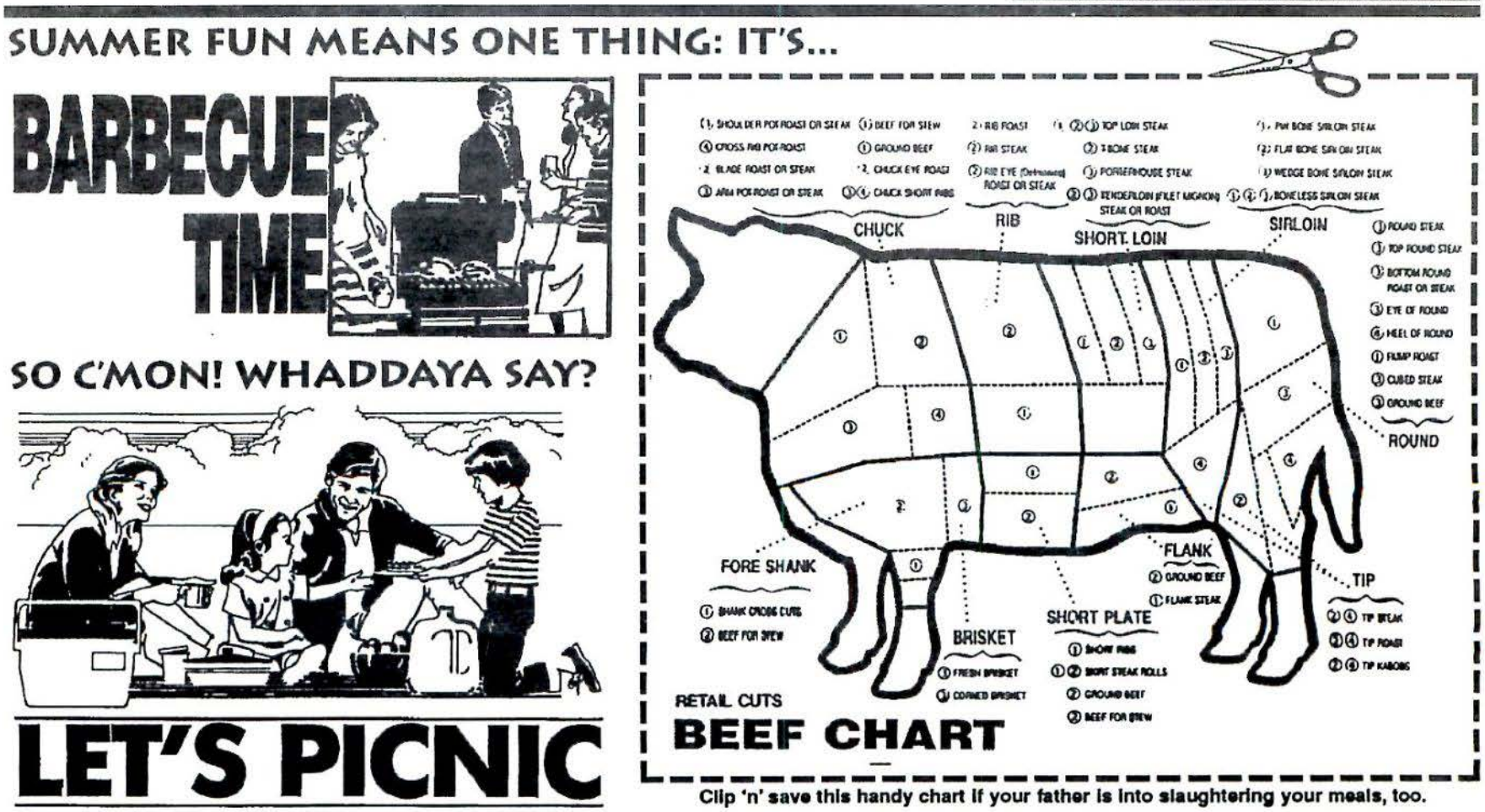
Worse than T-necks are people who wear necklaces on the outside of them, the epitome of disgust of course being a cheap gold chain with cross, teddy bear or heart pendant.

Julee Peezlee
Boulder, CO

Hey there, *Batman Forever* fans! Got your exclusive "Gotham Glassware" from McDonald's yet? The only reason I ask is because I am reminded of the summer of '92, when the chain's similar *Batman Returns* promotion was overshadowed by their Olympic basketball "Dream Team" one.

I recall eating my Chicken McNuggets and studying the plastic cup that came with the meal, and noticed that it had a picture of NBA great Earvin "Magic" Johnson on it, gripping a basketball and poised for action. At the time, I had no knowledge of a "Dream Team" tie-in. Instead, I was under the impression that McDonald's had resorted to doing anything for a buck, and had comissioned a "Victims of the Dreaded HIV Virus" cup series.

I expected to go back the next week and pick up an ice-cold Coke featuring Rock Hudson maybe shunning Doris Day's advances. And in the following weeks, we might find Roy Cohn suggestively twirling a gavel, Liberace clutching his candleabra and Freddie Mercury. I thought if I bought a Happy Meal, I might find a litle plastic Ryan White action figure as the prize inside. I thought if they would have started the promotion earlier in the summer, the Robert Reed and Anthony Perkins cups would've sold like hotcakes.



Rod,

I recently picked up my first-ever copy of **HITCH** (#7) at the very cool Criminal Records here in Atlanta. I must admit, I was first drawn to the paper because of Cornelius' hypnotic stare into my soul, but upon further perusal, I found there was much more to **HITCH** than a rare, ultra-cool cover story on *Planet of the Apes* ("Still Dirty, Still Damned"). Very funny, intelligent stuff indeed, Mr. Lott...Kudos to you and yours.

Once again...**HITCH**...good stuff! ("Duh," says Rod.) P.S.: Article on Crispin ("The Real Crispin Glover: Up Close and Scary")...totally fuckin' cool!

Adam Abramson
Atlanta, GA

Dear Rod,

Great mag! Love the layout and stories. Expect some cash coming your way for the Xuxa and *MST3K* articles ("Xuxa: Then and Now!," "We've Got Movie Sign!," **HITCH** 2). Almost bought a Xuxa doll at Toys 'R' Us, but felt like a pervert!

Mike
Riverview, MI

Dear Rod–

Hiya. I want to tell you what I loved in **HITCH** 7. Mr. Clipson had me rolling. "I had to tell her that it was just his coin pouch." Friggin' funny, Bob. It was a joke, right? I also severely enjoyed your pogs ("Free **HITCH** Pogs!"). Are pogs still popular? It seems like it's really boring. I don't know. If kids like it, it's probably awesome. Kids always know what's up.

Brian Musial
San Diego, CA

Hi Rod,

When I saw that you were putting your he-man adventures in **HITCH**, I decided that I had to subscribe. I really enjoyed your column when you were writing for the student newspaper at OU; it was so fresh and different from the other columns that were being written. So, anyway, I was really glad to see that you had continued your writing in a different format. I really liked the first issue you sent me. A friend showed me an earlier issue (**HITCH** 6) that had "Excerpts from David Hasselhoff's *Baywatch* Diary." That was classic. I don't know how you come up with some of your ideas.

I wish you luck on the success of **HITCH**. If you're using the Internet to get word of **HITCH** around, you might soon have more subscribers than you know what to do with.

Mike Bell
Norman, OK

Rod,

I enjoyed your article on zineing at work in the latest *Factsheet 5* very much, until you saw fit to say that anyone working in a Fortune 500 office "likely has nary an iota of creativity and, therefore, would not be putting out a zine."

I happen to work for AT&T, and as a manager, not a clerical (that makes me "the boss" so to speak, which I find amusing), I have used company time and resources to produce a couple novels and many short stories, many of which have been published in small-press mags over the last five years or so. I don't put out a zine, but do write fiction and have no conscience whatsoever about what I do with the company's resources. As a matter of fact, since I am "the boss," it is even more ironic that the people who work for me think that I am ever-industrious and ever busy at my PC, and my own manager thinks I am a great example for everyone of a hard worker.

Anyway, the noise is making it hard to type this, so just be aware that there are a few of us out here in Fortune 500 land who have an "iota of creativity," though I will grant you, most of the people I run into in this work environment are indescribably horrid, hollow, empty-brained clones who actually think AT&T is inportant enough to give up all the rest of their lives for.

Jim Meirose

Then you're an exception to the rule, Jim. To quote Keith Richards, you shouldn't take it so hard. Thanks for writing, though. (Oh, and we've forwarded your letter to both your manager at AT&T and the guy who signs your paycheck.)

Rod,

Saw the review in *Factsheet 5* and enjoyed your "Work Schmerk!" article. Please sign me up for a subscription! Yes, I guess I'm feelin' generous today, but I just liked the tone of your article. Good luck to you!

Tom Aczel
Quakertown, PA

Rod–

I read **HITCH** 7 on the plane Saturday. It seemed to generate quite a few stares. "America's Biggest Hole," hah!

Tom Lupoff
Austin, TX

Dear Rod,

HITCH 6 was hilarious! I always wondered what the deal was with those Mentos commericals. Keep up the good work with **HITCH**!..P.S. I'll make sure to put Xuxa's nipples to good use.

Merrell Hamer
Houston, TX

Hello, your Rodmanship–

I never did write to Joe Rogers to clear up any misunderstandings about my last letter (**HITCH** 6); I lost my momentum. Please print a photo of this ramblin' man, as I find myself strangely drawn to men who are angry with me! Just for the record, tell ole Joe that I had the headache already. Perhaps he has low comprehension skills, or his mind has been addled by counting all those nose rings ("Joe a-Go-Go," **HITCH** 7).

I recently went on an adventure to find the town settled by a family named Hitch. I even slept on Hitch Blvd., as the photo will attest to. (I had, of course, awakened by this time.) **HITCH** 7 was the best. My friend from Hitch Blvd. wanted my copy, but I said, "No way, man!" More Biff! Biff is cool!

Last thing: Have you ever had a mocha-flavored Power Bar? I believe the odor from this food item stays in the urine longer than any food you have previously mentioned ("Snap, Crackle, Piss," **HITCH** 6). It is truly bizarre; check it out.

Amy Lynn Hunt
Oklahoma City, OK

HITCH–

We carry your fine product in our store and it sells like hotcakes.

Go! Compact Discs
Arlington, VA

A HE-MAN ADVENTURE

A Visit to the Back Quack

By Rod Lott

I've often heard chiropractors are not "real" doctors. I've often heard them pegged as "quacks." **HITCH** senior editor Ken Davis believes this; he went to one near his Wichita home not long ago. Witness a portion of their conversation:

"What's going on?" Ken asked the doctor, after hearing barking dogs.

"Oh, there's a dog-grooming place next door," the doctor explained. "These walls are paper-thin."

"Is that really safe, with an X-ray machine around?" Ken asked.

"Hmmm..." replied the doctor, "maybe that's why the dogs are barking!"

Since most local chiropractors offer free initial examinations and consultations, I decided to introduce myself into the world of chiropractic, modern medicine's bastard son. I leafed through the Yellow Pages until I found a chiropractor – we'll call him Dr. Jake for fear of litigation – near my home and made a 3 p.m. appointment.

The floormat outside his office read, "CHIROPRACTIC: A STEP TO BETTER HEALTH." Upon entering the reception area and checking in, I was unimpressed. The office was stocked with back issues of *Highlights for Children*, and old, disturbing Air Supply tunes were being piped in.

Pretty soon, Dr. Jake's medical assistant Kathryn stepped in, took me by the hand and led me into Dr. Jake's lair. We sat in his office and chatted briefly.

"Rod, we have only two concerns here," she said. "The first concern is your problem. The second is, can we help your problem? It is these two concerns which lead to our success with patients. Another thing that leads to success is teamwork, and Dr. Jake stresses teamwork. We all work just as hard as he does; we really do. There are some who don't, and that is why they are no longer here. Honestly."

I noticed right off Kathryn was attractive, in a strange, medical-assistant sort-of-way. As she asked me questions about my fictional and totally nonexistent back pain, I could tell she was somewhat enamored of me, too.

"Do you have any numbness in your arms or legs?" she asked.

"No," I said.

"Dizziness?"

"No."

"Ringing of the ears?"

"No."

"Headaches?"

"Yes."

Her next question shattered the tender, loving mood we had mutually created: "Constipation? Diarrhea? Burning when you urinate?"

"No."

She then left to go retrieve the good doctor, leaving me alone in his office, providing me with the opportunity to look at the embarrassing pictures of his wife and kids on the wall. It seems Dr. Jake got the entire family Christmas gift certificates to Glamour Shots.

Kathryn returned with Dr. Jake, who hid behind the door until she could introduce him, so he could make a grand entrance. To me, he looked like the human incarnation of Droopy.

Before we could even exchange a simple handshake, Dr. Jake immediately started pushing down on my head with a considerable amount of force, and in the process, messed up my hair. "How's this feel? This hurt?" he asked.

He then led me into an examination room and instructed, "The only thing I need you to do, Rod, is take off your shirt."

I did so, and felt violated, an unwilling pawn to Dr. Jake's twisted, half-naked, pseudo-spinal games.

A lowly assistant named Sherry came in and took my vitals: weight, height, temperature and blood pressure (180 lbs., 6 feet even, 98.6° and 140 over 60, respectively). Dr. Jake then took my pulse and asked, "Nervous?" Apparently he had already forgotten the blunt trauma to which he subjected my cranium to just moments earlier.

So he started pushing me around again.

"Turn toward me and we'll push you backwards....Okay, now the other way....That fine?...How about these bones? Any of 'em tender?"

"What exactly do you mean by *tender*?" I asked, recalling that's the word my mother used when referring to a good steak.

"Well...do any of 'em feel different than the others?" he asked, before proceeding to the weirdest exercise of them all, when he told me to "cross your arms like this, tilt your head forward and now slouch, slouch, slouch, slouch down like you're bearing into a bowel movement. Does that hurt anywhere?"

Maybe after an enchilada dinner. I wondered if he was simply asking me this for his own enjoyment. I noticed the jar of tongue depressors on the cabinet, only imagining the horrors he could inflict with such tools, perhaps saving them for the more intimate exams with female patients.

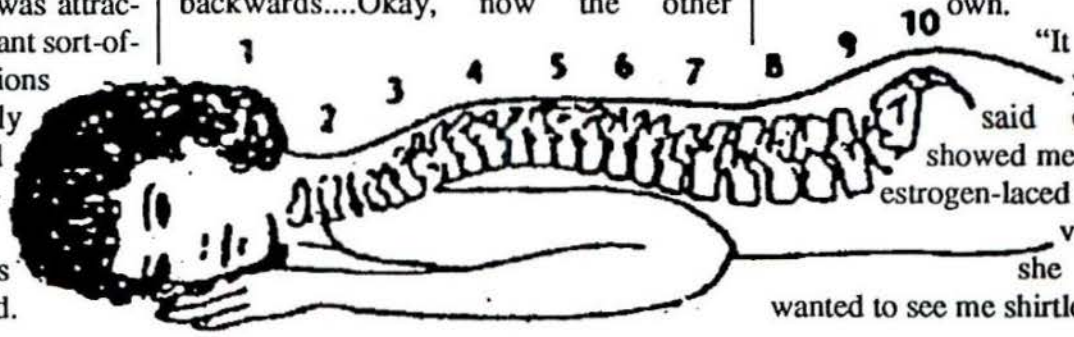
After putting his hands all over my back, he said, "It feels like you have a curve in your spine. Anyone ever told you that?"

"No," I said. At least he didn't say I had scoliosis. It's a crippler of the young, you know.

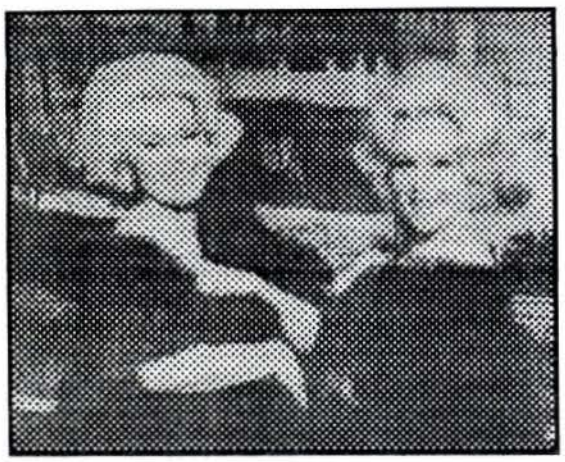
Dr. Jake warned, although this initial exam told him nothing, that I might have "an imbalance in your curves" that he'd like to take X-rays of, for *only* $70. For those that question the use of X-rays in chiropractic, Dr. Jake might point out the sign above the machine that reads, "WHY X-RAY? Because to see is to know, and to not see is to guess. We refuse to guess about your health."

"I'll think about it," I lied, since there's nothing really wrong. If I were the Elephant Man, things might be a bit different.

I dressed, and Dr. Jake handed me some informative pamphlets. "Kathryn will show you the way out," he said, as if I wasn't capable of making a right turn on my own.



"It was nice to meet you, Rod," Kathryn said cheerily as she showed me the way. From the estrogen-laced tone of her amiable voice, I could tell she had desperately wanted to see me shirtless. **H**



Gabor Sister Egg Poll

	fried	scrambled	poached	hard-boiled	omelette	egg custard
Zsa Zsa	X	X	X		X	X
Eva	X		X	X		X

Sure-Fire Ways to Get Tons o' Chicks

These days, kiddos, love ain't easy. But these days, who the hell wants it? Face it: All any red-blooded American male wants is sex. Here's how you can get yours.

1. The Jim Morrison Approach

This is a very effective way to attract girls aged 15-25. Grow your hair out long, smile rarely, act mysterious and occasionally recite some sinister nonsense poetry.

This technique has special added benefits which make its use even more attractive:

- All the drugs you want.
- You don't even have to be able to sing.
- Lots and lots of graffiti on your tomb.

2. The He-Man Technique

Used predominantly at parties, the he-man approach is achieved simply by wearing a letter jacket from the state university or your appropriate high school. Just feel the power this garment alone evokes! Feel like you could drive a Jeep or a 4x4 now?

At the party, follow these etiquette tips, and the blondes are sure to follow:

- Use profanity and phrases like "Dude!" and "Bad-ass!" frequently.
- Tank up on as much Coors Light as possible, making neat sculptures out of the empty cans, and belching loud and proud after each beer you down. Dude!
- If you manage to get a babe in the bedroom, have at it! Remember that it matters not what happens in actuality; regardless of whether you "score" or not, you can still tell all your friends that you did! Hey, that's just about as great! Bad-ass!

This method is especially popular in the Midwestern United States, where men are men, and women are babes.

3. The "I Wear Black Exclusively" Method

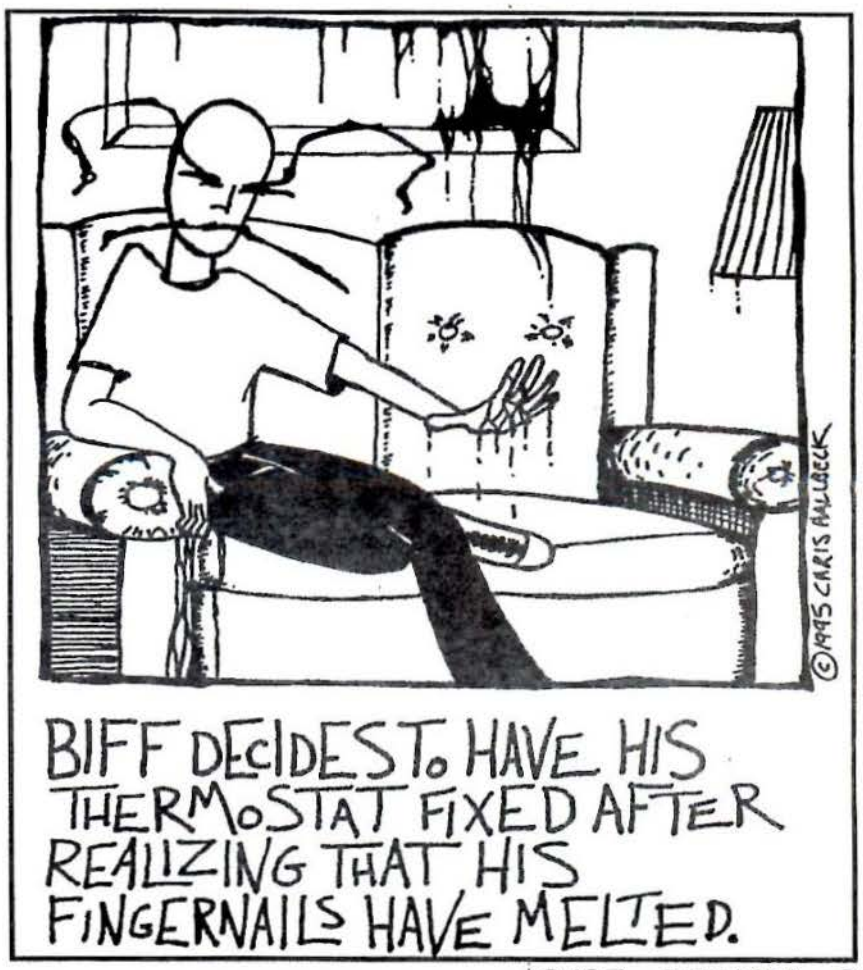
This is the approach used to get those black-clothing-wearing chicks. Simply go to the local undertakers' clothing gallery and get "in mourning." Stay out of the sun and develop black circles under your eyes. Then go to the Flaming Lips concert, smoke a few Clove cigarettes to build courage and walk right up to the nearest female and ask, "Hello. Don't you think death is a turn-on?"

Anyhow, there it is. Three crackerjack nymph-nabbers at your disposal.

—Joe Rogers

BIFF BY CHRIS HALLBECK

Write to *The Book of Biff* at P.O. Box 802, Everett, MA 02149. E-mail: BiffLink@ix.netcom.com



WIN $$$!

The FBI's Fugitive of the Month

WANTED

For Conspiracy to Commit Racketeering / Distribute Narcotics

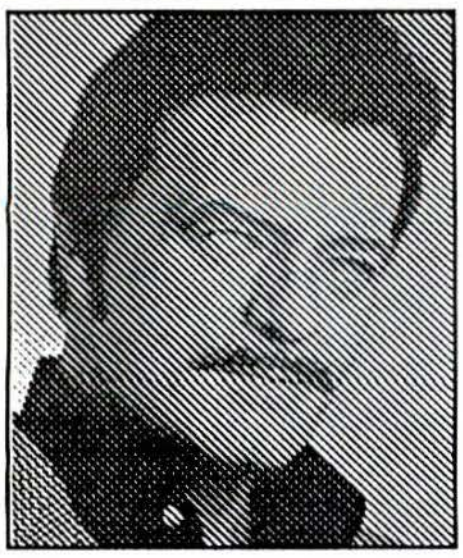
Armando Garcia

ALIAS: Aramando Gracia, Scarface
DOB: 1 / 20 / 62
BIRTHPLACE: Cuba
HEIGHT / WEIGHT: 5'9", 180 lbs.
BUILD: muscular
HAIR: brown
EYES: brown
COMPLEXION: medium
RACE: white
SOCIAL SECURITY: 359-52-4397
IDENTIFYING SCARS: burn scar on left cheek

First of all: Hey, dummy. The whole idea of using an alias is two-fold: 1) to differ greatly from your real name in order to hide effectively, and 2) to not call attention to yourself.

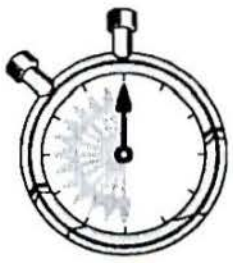
All you've done is add a letter to your first name, and transpose two letters in your last. How long did that take you to do? And if there's ever a name to make you stand out, "Scarface" is it. You might as well wear a T-shirt that reads "Arrest me, for I am a stupid felon."

Has anyone seen this doltish oaf? If so, contact your local FBI office and demand your reward, or call Washington HQ at (202) 324-3000.



The Robert Goulet

DEATH WATCH



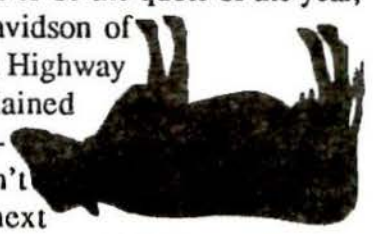
Approximately 26 years and 6 months remaining

OKC BBQ DOA

In the wee, early-morning hours of May 30, a truck driver hauling a trailer full of cattle through Oklahoma City, attempting to take a highway turn at 75 mph, plummeted off the overpass. The would-be speed demon, along with some 48 innocent cows, died at the scene.

Those cows that did not die instantly had to be destroyed. Although a meat plant came to pick the remains off I-35, the dead animals won't be converted into McRib sandwiches anytime soon, or ever, for that matter.

In what has to be the quote of the year, Lt. Gerald Davidson of the Oklahoma Highway Patrol explained why the Bessie corpses won't be your next meal. "Anytime you butcher anything for food purposes, you have to follow a certain procedure," Davidson said. "And this ain't it."



It Don't Matter If You're 6 or 5

A few things Michael Jackson said during the commercial breaks from his interview with Diane Sawyer on ABC's *PrimeTime Live*:

• "Excuse me, Diane, but the paperboy's here to collect. Lisa, honey, could you please hand me my wallet and that tube of Astroglide?"

• "I wish Macaulay Culkin were here because I have an itchy itch that can only be scratched by Richie Rich!"

• "Diane, do you think it's working? If not, I blame you, Lisa Marie, because you're one big, ruthless, *ugly* bitch."

Holy Role Models, Batman!

At the Oklahoma City premiere of *Batman Forever*, local band The Flaming Lips – which have a song on the soundtrack – showed up.

In front of a packed house, the lead singer – being interviewed by a DJ – told the audience that when their song came on during the movie, they should clap their hands. Then, after a moment, he changed his mind. "Just tear the place apart, man," he said. No one did, partly because few in the audience were under the age of 21.

STATS

"Mine? *What* Mine?"

Desert Storm's Unluckiest Soldiers

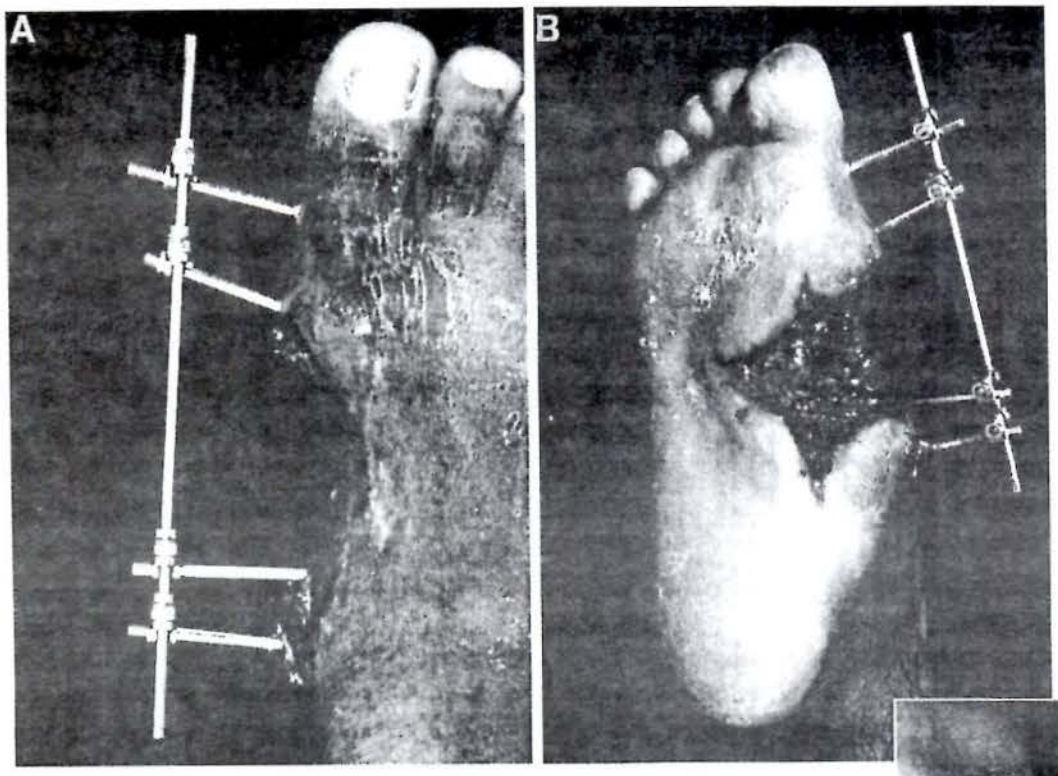
Most of America loves to brag about Desert Storm. And why not? Despite the fact that Saddam Hussein is still alive, it was a war in which the fighting was brief, and we kicked some major tail.

However, there are a few Desert Storm vets who'd most likely want to forget all about that war.

Yes, we're talking about the people that came home with parts of their hands and feet blown off.

According to the February issue of *Military Medicine*, 15 patients treated among four centers sustained a grand total of 18 wounds requiring treatment. The average age of the ailing soldier stood at 22 years, from a range of 19-30. All but one solider was male.

From the pictures below, you can only imagine how painful such injuries how. Now get this: the average amount of time from the initial injury to "definitive wound coverage" was *seven days*. That's right: Lt. Dan or Sgt. Rock or whoever was basically hanging around for one whole week with a gaping, open wound, no doubt inviting a lot of pesky flies.



CASE 1

(at left)

This poor man, age 28, received his foot injuries due to a mine blast. Good news, though: After nine months, someone fashioned him a modified combat boot, and he was returned to full duty!

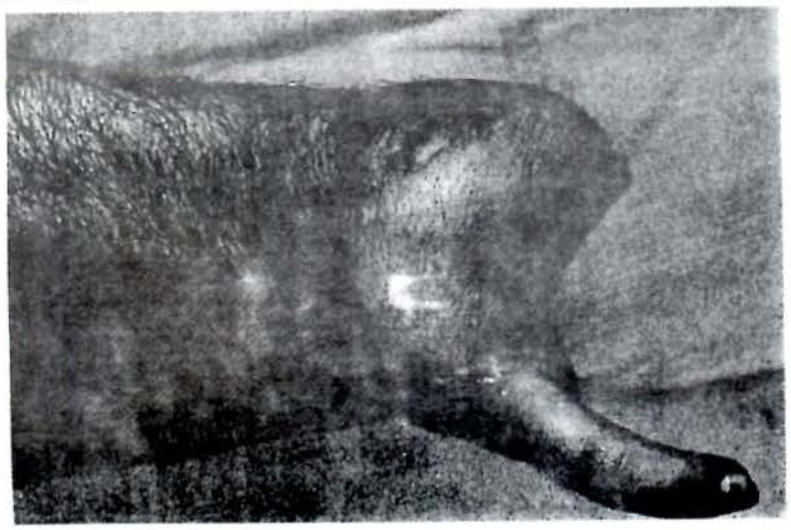
CASE 2

(below)

This even poorer man, age 27, suffered a gunshot wound to his chest, abdomen and right hand. His "new" hand now resembles a lobster claw.

According to the article, "war-related casualties may occur in numbers potentially exceeding the capabilities of field medical facilities. The military triage system is employed to ensure rapid treatment of those individuals with severe but survivable injuries. Whether missile, fragment or mine, high-velocity battle wounds are characterized by extensive contamination and tissue devitalization."

Not to mention their power to destroy the appetite of any onlooker.



Hootie-O-Matic

Let her cry? Nah, let her reap Top 40 success and untold millions in adult-contemporary album sales as she apes Hootie & the Blowfish, AAA radio's latest mellow pop phenomenon! From the wistful longings of "Let Her Cry" to the inspirational affirmations of "Hold My Hand," Hootie tunes are merely strings of one simplistic cliché after another – so elementary that anyone can do it.

So why not you? With **HITCH**'s Hootie-O-Matic, all the elements are intact – the three-word titles, the woeful opening lines, the throwaway drug references and even the stupid names – plus, a *Newsweek* profile and virtual round-the-clock airplay on VH-1 are guaranteed! What are you waiting for? The world wants to love you the best that it can!

—Rod Lott and Steve Hunt

START HERE!

SONG TITLE

(Select one word from each column.)

A	B	C
Keep	the	Vow
Move	Her	Smile
Seek	His	Faith
Take	Our	Love
Become	Their	Trust
Give	One	Angel

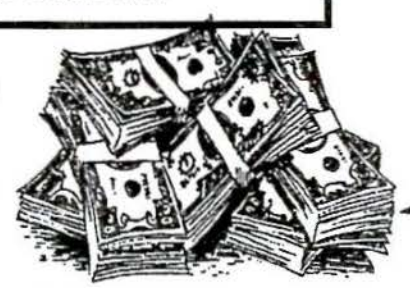
STEP 2!

BEGINNING LINE

(Select one.)

1. Oh, it was not so long ago...
2. Oh, now that I look back...
3. Oh, you know these times are hard, but...
4. Oh, if only I could see her once more...
5. Oh, those days we spent alone...
6. Oh, it's true that I love cookies...

"It *really* works!" —*Hootie*



STEP 3!

NAUGHTY BEHAVIOR ALLUSION

(Select one.)

1. Sittin' on the porch with brew in hand...
2. Hangin' on the corner with my friend the bottle...
3. Lightin' up at the break of day...
4. Shootin' a goofball into my arm...
5. Takin' a whiz on the Dipsy Dumpster...
6. Runnin' with scissors through her house...

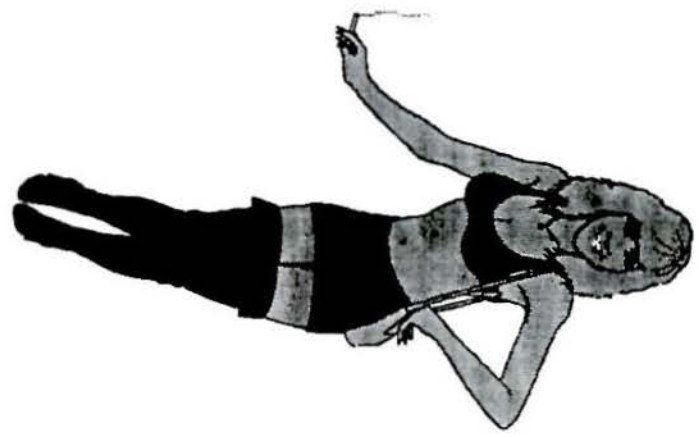
WHAT TO CALL YOURSELF

(Select one word from each column.)

A		B
Cookie		Blowpops
Bootie		Blowhards
Thirsty	&	Blowholes
Footsie	the	Blow-Me-Downs
Bitsy		Fish-N-Chips
Itchy		Grouper

END HERE!

The Englishman Who Came



I'd like to ask Huge Grunt...er, I mean, *Hugh Grant*...a few questions:

- What were you thinking?
- Something wrong with Elizabeth Hurley?
- Ever heard of motel rooms? Home delivery? Ski masks? *Playboy*? 1-900 numbers? Pay-per-view? Cold showers? Abstinence?
- And lastly, was *she really* the best-looking whore you could swing?

Nevertheless, count on this Brit to try to charm his way out of this misfortune and back into public favor by, ironically, capitalizing on the event. To wit, his future film projects:

- *The Englishman Who Went Up Sunset Boulevard and Came Down on a Prostitute*
- *Forty Dollars and a Misdemeanor*
- *Nine Minutes*
- remakes of his already appropriately titled *Sirens*, *Impromptu* and *Lair of the White Worm*.

But will it be enough to prevent the inevitable slide from his status as Hollywood's Next Big Thing to full-fledged, scandal-scarred box-office poison? Hugh, in the words of David Cassidy, when he was with The Partridge Family, "I think my big, promising American career is over."

Les Pennick's Smart Computer Shopper Tips

Some call me a computer connoisseur, and I am not humble enough to disagree. I mean, selling computers at Radio Shack for almost eight months has given me a certain degree of expertise in the field of technological paraphernalia. People are always asking me for advice on what to look for when buying a computer. It's similar to when a doctor goes to a party and is asked by the celebrants to look at their bum ankles, rashes and other miscellaneous ailments.

Why, just last weekend, I was on my lunch break in the food court and had just begun to enjoy a candied apple when a passerby noticed my Radio Shack nametag. He pulled up a chair and picked my brain for almost 20 minutes! I am usually not bothered when people want my advice, but I was trying to enjoy a candied apple, for crying out loud! But I am a tree and I can bend. I graciously gave the man a few nuggets of wisdom, and this seemed to please him.

It gave me such a good feeling that I thought it would be a great idea to share this information with the readers of **HITCH**. Heed my advice! Use the tips that I have given you or you will end up with some crappy machine that won't even play *Doom II* without locking up.

When looking for a new computer, consumers would be wise to go with a high-end Pentium system. Make sure you get one of the new Pentiums that doesn't have the floating point division flaw. Chances of the flaw affecting the average user are remote, but when you are about to attack a Former Human Commando with your plasma rifle in *Doom II*, you don't want a division error to ruin your aim.

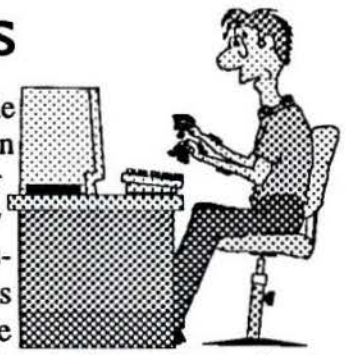
When it comes to choosing your monitor, do so carefully and don't get some cheap, 15-inch job. One of the best monitors I've seen is the ViewSonic 21G. It has a 21-inch, flat square screen, .25-dot pitch and 1600 x 1280 non-interlaced resolution. At $1,700, it isn't cheap, but play *Doom II* on it for a few minutes, and you'll appreciate the difference a few extra dollars can make.

One of the biggest rules of thumb when shopping for a computer is to buy the most RAM and biggest hard drive you can afford. I completely concur. The more RAM the better. *Doom II* runs sluggish with 4MB, decent with 8MB, good with 12 MB, but great with 16MB! If you can afford more RAM than that, then I would not try to stop you. Can you imagine *Doom II* running on 32MB of RAM? Man, that would be a hoot!

Most people wonder what size hard drive to get. The 170MB hard drive used to be the standard. Today, the standard is at least 500MB. However, I would highly recommend at least a gig. *Doom II* only takes up about 15MB of precious hard drive real estate. But take my word for it: When you start collecting *Doom II* add-on wad files and editors, you will be glad you have the extra storage space.

Sound is also important. Honestly, as long as your sound card is "Sound Blaster"-compatible, you will be fine. It's the speakers you want to ensure are of the highest quality. Don't settle for the cheap speakers provided with most computer systems today unless you like the thought of a Fire Imp's scream sounding like it's coming out of a tin can. On my computer, I have Yamaha YST-MSW10 Powered Stereo Subwoofers. With these babies, the Barons of Hell in *Doom II* don't just grunt when I blast them with my Rocket Launcher, they *howl!*

One mustn't forget the importance of a modem. When you consider the fact that the modem will be your vehicle on the way to alt.games.doom on the Internet and will also be your means of playing Deathmatch *Doom II* with friends over the phone lines, I'm sure we can agree that only the fastest modem will do. One can also buy modems that are voice-compatible. For most people, this is just an unnecessary frill, unless you plan to use your computer as an answering machine or voice-mail system. Since you will spend many hours on the Internet and playing Deathmatch, I would advise against it.



Many people are interested in buying a printer with their new computer system. Again, this is one of those bells-and-whistles deals most people can do without. Many people will argue that they need a printer to produce reports for their business or papers for school and other such foolishness. To them, I say, "Where are your priorities?" If you feel it is a "must-have" and want to waste the money, go ahead. I'm just saying don't spend a lot of money frivolously on peripherals you don't need, and whatever you do, don't buy at Tandy, because they are crap.

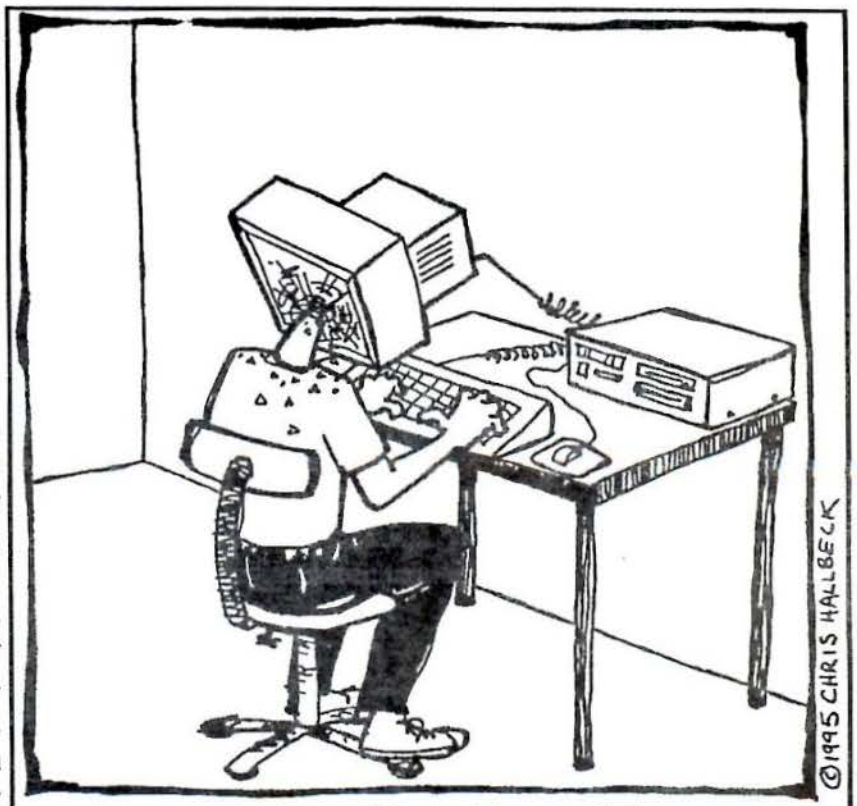
Hopefully, with these tips, you are better informed on what to look for when buying a new computer system. If you're ever at Bannister Mall in Kansas City, feel free to stop by for a visit. If I'm not working at the Shack, look for me in the food court or hanging around Le Mans Arcade.

—Les Pennick

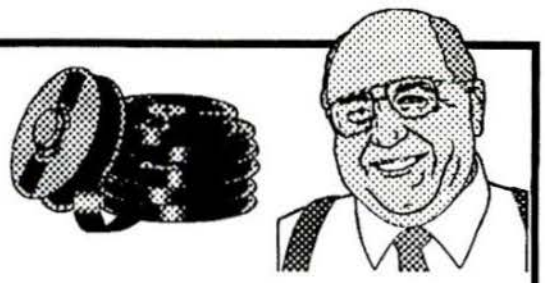
BIFF

BY CHRIS HALLBECK

Write to *The Book of Biff* at P.O. Box 802, Everett, MA 02149. E-mail: BiffLink@ix.netcom.com



BIFF CREATES HIS OWN VIRTUAL REALITY SYSTEM.



Tom Neesnan's Belated Movie Reviews

Class Action
(1991)
Rating: 9 1/2 out of 10

I usually am not one to see films involving law, but when I heard "the Fish" (Larry Fishburne) was in this one, I quickly put on my blue house-shoes, ran out in my robe, got my paper and looked to see when *Class Action* started first. Well, when I arrived at the show 30 minutes early, I was treated to a film like no other. It is about the law, cars, families and so much more. I think you will like it, too.

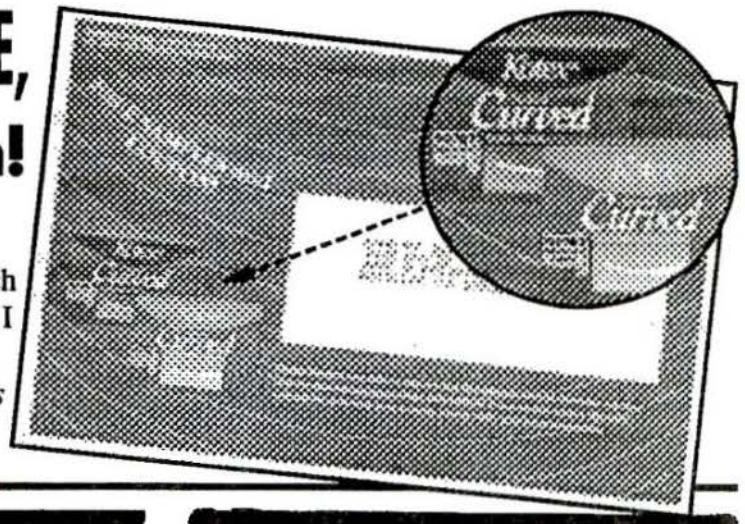
Screwballs
(1983)
Rating: 9 1/2 out of 10

This is a good movie that you can file under Z for zany! It is the story of a high school chock full of mischief, pretty girls and, of course, as have all schools, crazy kids! See this film soon and you will wish you were back at school havin' fun once again! The scene like the one where the prettiest woman presses her boobs against the car window never happened when I was a schoolboy, though.

Straight Talk
(1992)
Rating: 9 1/2 out of 10

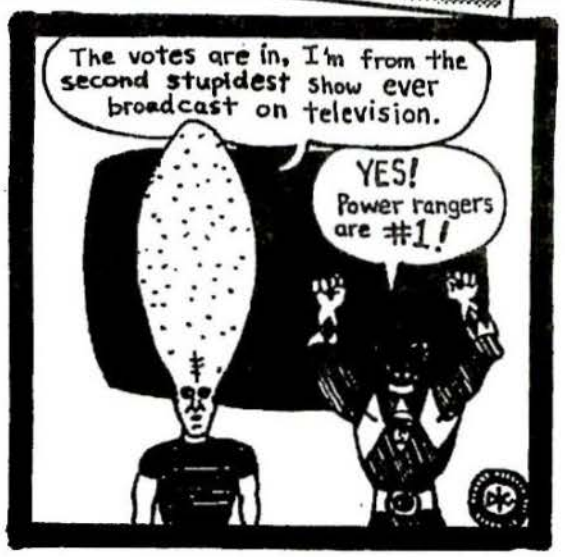
When I feel lonely at night, I often listen to, and sometimes call, my favorite radio talk show, *Talkin' Tonya*. Other times, I go to the picture show. *When I* heard there was a new picture about such a program, I thought, "Wow, that's a better combination than yams and butter!" Boy, when I saw this show about a country girl (Dolly Parton) who goes to Chicago to have a talk show and fall in love, my movie-loving self was pleased beyond belief. See this picture soon, and that is my straight talk about a fine, fine show!

WAITAMINUTE, Mr. Postman!



Perhaps I'm more in touch with my feminine side than I need to be.

—Ken Davis



GREEN LANTERN'S RING DIDN'T WORK AGAINST ANYTHING YELLOW, WHY DIDN'T SOMEBODY PELT HIM WITH TONKAS?
That road grater could mean deep trouble.

SOLUTION TO LAST ISSUE'S HITCH CROSSWORD

L	E	M	O	N		M	E	A	D	O	W	L	A	R	K		N	O	P	E
I	R	O	N		C		C	L	O	U	D	S		A	K	E	E		O	A
M	O	D	E	R	N	L	O	V	E	R		D	A	R	K	T	O	W	E	R
E	T	E		A	N	A		I		T	O		K	O		C		A		P
	I	R	O	C			R	H	E	T	O	R	I	C		R	H	O	D	A
S	C	A	V	E	N	G	E	S		W	I	N		M	O		L		L	A
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SAID

"What's 18 take away 11?"
—a 7-11 clerk to his colleague

HITCH is now on the

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http://www.ionet.net/~twilken/hitched.html

A **HITCH** Quiz

Feminism '95

Let's face it, folks: It's the '90s, and if you were to tune into Geraldo, Oprah, Jenny or Jerry, you'd know that things are not always the way they appear to be. Certainly by now, we've all seen *The Crying Game*. Walk down the street behind a person with long hair...remember the time when a long-haired human automatically meant a female?

For those who have ever questioned their partner's gender, here now is our guide to feminism, the perfect companion to those first-date mysteries. The next time you find yourself asking, "Am I with a man in drag or is that a banana in her purse?" just whip it out – the questionnaire, that is.

To consider yourself a woman, you must answer "yes" to at least eight of these questions.

1. Do you walk past a grassy meadow and question your own freshness?

2. Have you ever walked along the seashore with your mother and questioned her freshness?

3. Do you have a preference between dry weave, wings or peach-protection slips?

4. Does "TSS" mean more to you than "Times Square stores"?

5. Have you ever been assaulted by an 18-year-old perfume sniper on your way through the mall?

6. Do you care about the environment every single day of the month, so much so that you prefer the biodegradable applicators vs. the more comfortable plastic applicators?

7. Have you ever analyzed Cindy Crawford and realized, she's not that pretty; Christy Turlington and realized, she's not that skinny; or Kate Moss and realized that she just plain looks unhealthy?

8. Are you able to find a new pair of jeans that really fit you?

9. Do you have urges to commit violent acts every time you hear the names Jenny Craig, Ann Jillian or Susan Powter?

10. Have you ever created a chocolate milkshake using a Slim-Fast and Eddy's Ice Cream?

11. Did you find *Sleepless in Seattle* touching?

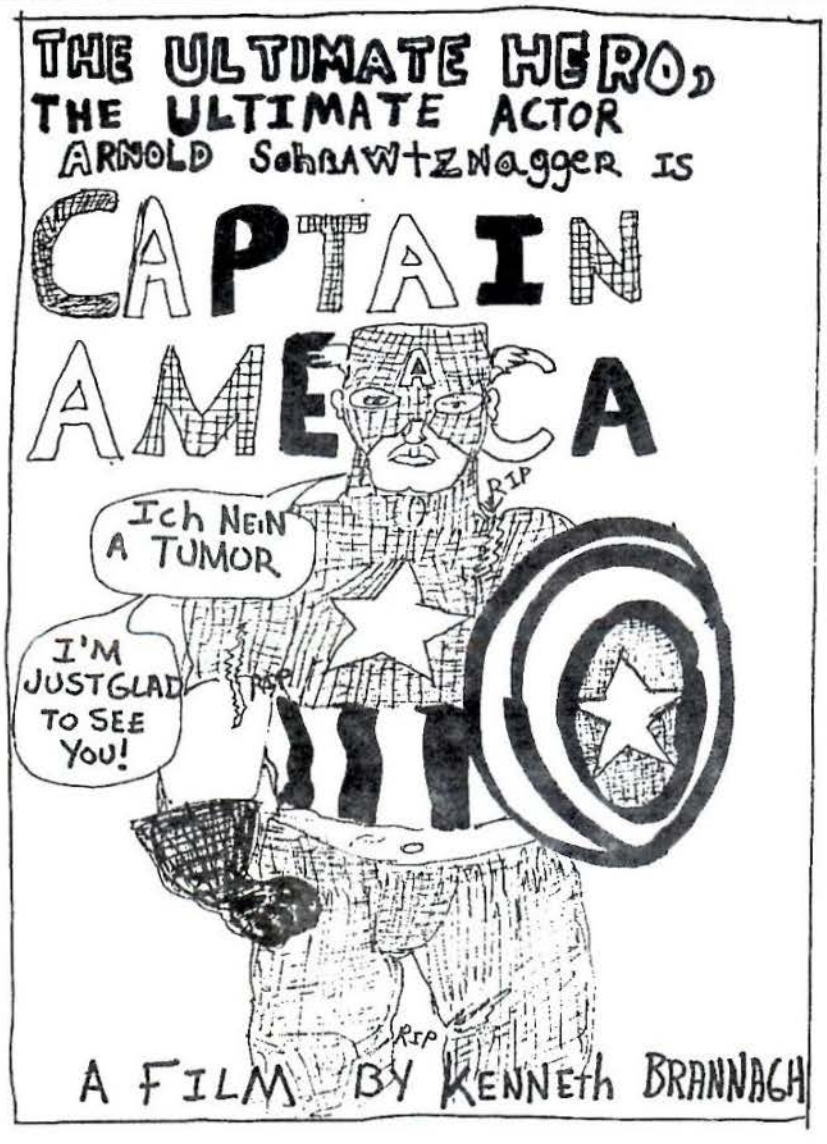
12. Did you view the plot twist of *The Crying Game* as no big deal?

13. Are you offended by the Secret deodorant commercials that claim its product is "strong enough for a man, but pH-balanced just for you"?

14. Have you ever contemplated why women need a different laxative than men, despite no difference between the genders' digestive systems?

15. Have you ever noticed that there are no men in Donahue's audience?

—*Clancy*



"PRITHEE Thee SPEAK the speech I Speak To Thee...."
VAS IST DAS?
DIRECTOR
IN ENGLISH YA BLOODY GOON!
MALCOLM MAC DOWELL AS RED SKULL!
HAIL HITLER AND ALL THAT ROT!
I'M Singin' IN The RAIN! Oh WHAT A GLORIOUS FEELING!
Robert Downey JR, STAR of "ChapLin", AS HITLER!
IT'S NOT A TUMOR THAT Leads US TO Conquer The WORLD
IT'S The WILL TO POWER!
SEIG HEIL!
ROB MORROW AS Bucky, The Boy Sidekick
OY GEVELT! FOR This I GAVE UP "Northern Exposure"? "BATMAN FOREVER," It ain't.
BUCKY IST DAS JUDEN? NIEN! NIEN! NIEN!

Baywatch's Tasmanian Devil

"I'm not that muscular, but it looks like I am on TV," said the surplus-voweled Jaason Simmons, the bad boy of TV's banal *Baywatch*, who draws smiley faces around his belly button on his own 8 x 10s.

A native of Tasmania, Simmons recently made an appearance at an Oklahoma City water park to promote his program, the producers of which claim is "the world's most popular show," viewed weekly by more than one billion people. I happen to not be one of them.

Prior to his autograph session, the vegetarian Simmons ate half of a tuna salad sandwich for lunch. He also paused in a moment of seriousness to pick up one of his uneaten fries and ponder aloud in his Aussie accent, "I wonder who invented curly fries?"

Though surprisingly shy and reserved, Simmons offered comment on his costars.

On the surgically enhanced Pamela Anderson: "She's a really funny person." He has not yet met her new husband, Motley Crue's Tommy Lee, but said he admired Lee's "tatdoos" and was himself getting one on his right arm next week (he already has one on his left arm).

On the acting-impaired David Hasselhoff: "He's a really nice guy. Really tall. Like 6'3" or something."

On the terminally snooty Yasmine Bleeth: "She's one of the 50 Most Beautiful People. ...Yasmine's going to have a *big* butt in the future."

On his own character: "I think he should be more evil. He got too nice in the end."

While Simmons conceded that "*Baywatch* may not make you rich, but it'll make you famous," he hopes to get more exposure from his upcoming cover shoot for *Playgirl*. "I haven't seen the pictures, but I hope it turns out good," he said, adding his life preserver won't be revealed.

Allowing a group of fanatic kids to follow him around the park, Simmons said he didn't want to ride any of the water rides (citing an ear infection) and that he didn't know how to play volleyball. Married to a Mexican-American woman in the airline industry for three years, the 25-year-old Simmons said he adores his grandma, whom he calls "Nana."

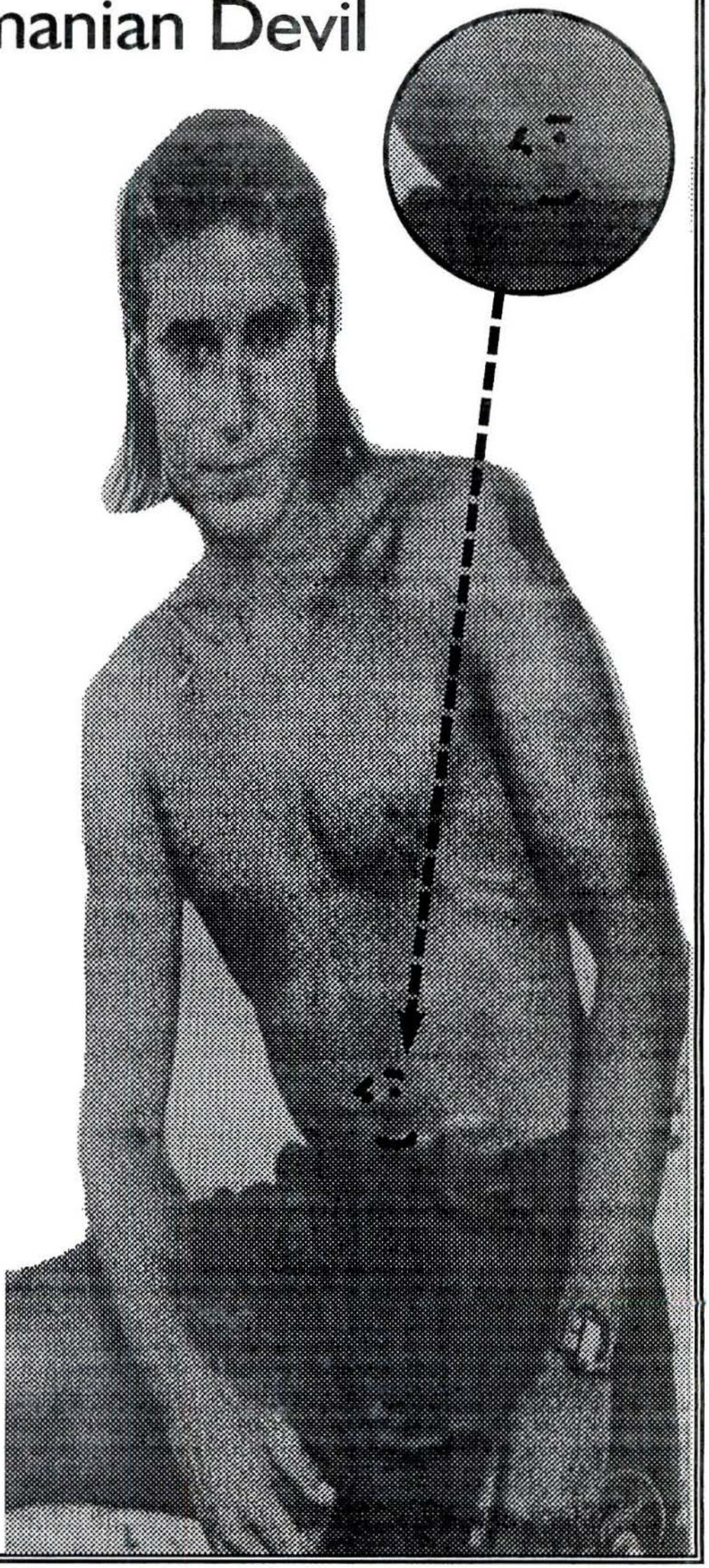
When the subject of conversation turned to Sen. Bob Dole's attack on Hollywood morals, Simmons asked, "Who?"

"Bob Dole," someone said.

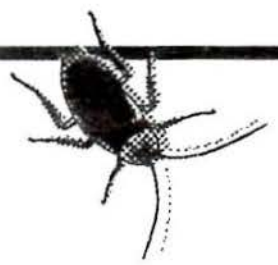
"Oh," Simmons said.

"Don't you read?" his agent asked.

—Cybil Longfellow



"Dear Mr. Clipson:"



May 23, 1995

Chelsea Clinten
The White House
Washington DC

Dear Chelsea Clinten:

As a senior citizen who has been a faithful taxpayer for several years now, I have never written to a First Daughter before (ha ha, First Daughter, I just made that up!). But I deem it necessary.

From what I have seen of you on the TV you look like a very nice girl and a smart girl. But all I hear about are things that either your dad the President does or things that your Mom does. Why don't we hear more about you? I know that on his show Jake Leno has made fun of you. Well hogwash, I say. Don't listen to him.

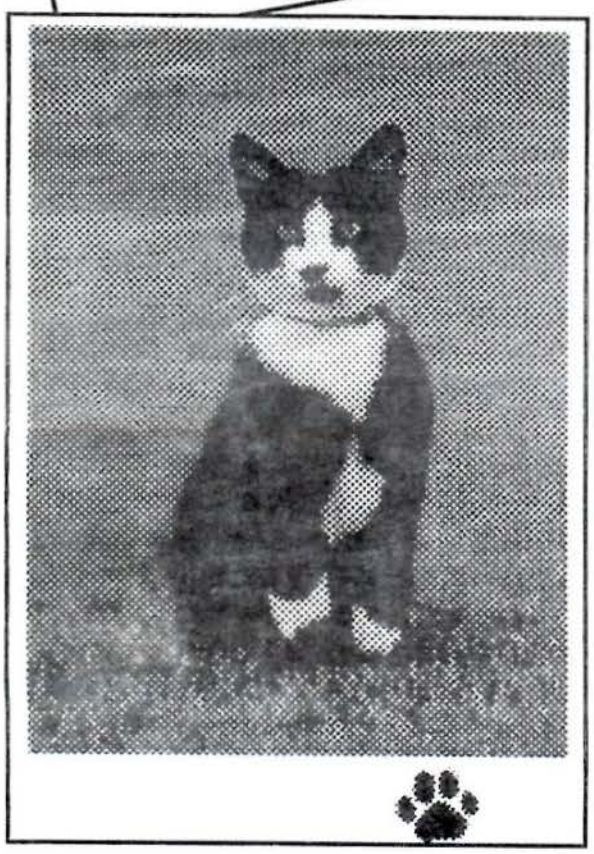
What do you like to do? Do you like living in The White House? Do they let you play with toys in the halls? I have some Strawberry Shortcake dolls that my granddaughter Mary does not want anymore and you are welcome to have them if you want. What is your favorite color and food? Do you like to watch the TV? My favorite show is the Rescue one where they save people. I also like Andy Griffin in "Matlock" and "Full House." What do you like? Also I am sad they took "Full House" off the air. It was a fine quality program. Can you please tell your dad the President to tell the station to put it back on? Thank you.

Please write me back and send me an autographed picture of you. If you have one of you and your cat Mittens then that would be even better. Also, I have applied for a US Supreme court judge job with your dad the President, so please put in a good word for me but don't tell him I asked you to, OK? It will be our little secret. If I get the job I will take you out to lunch to MacDonalds or whereever you want to thank you and meet you.

Thank you kindly,

Robert Clipson

Robert C. Clipson
5504 N. Tulsa
Oklahoma City, Ok. 73112



Thank you for taking the time to write to Chelsea. She appreciates all the wonderful letters she receives and wishes that she could answer them all herself.

My family and I are grateful for the support and encouragement we have received from around the world. Your warm wishes mean a great deal to all of us.

Bill Clinton

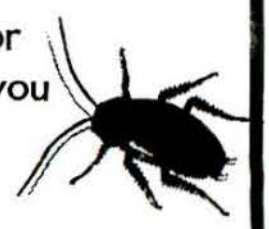
Fast Food HORRORS!

By Rod Lott

When I first came up with the idea to document bad experiences people have had in public eateries, whether they be fast-food establishments or fancy restaurants, I wanted to get as many true-life tales as I could, so I plastered my request all over the Internet. The best responses, all of which their respective authors swear by, flooded in almost immediately, as did this protest: *"Why would you want to publish rumours , here-say (sic), or any other unverifiable stories to undermine the restaurant industry that millions of people a day trust with their health. What good is creating public mistrust by a few unsubstantiated incidents as opposed to the positive experiences most people have when eating out?"*

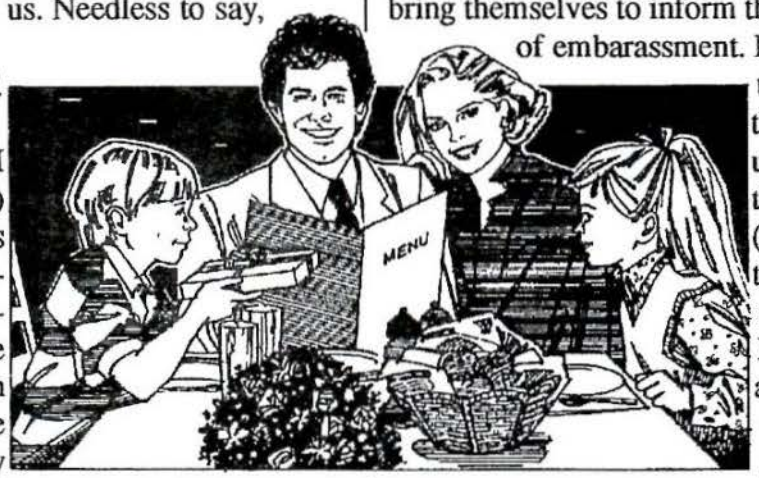
To the author (who, given his spelling of the word "rumors," is either British, Canadian or a member of Fleetwood Mac), I answer: Because it's fun! In all seriousness, though, I think every-one reading would agree that, although we do have many positive dining experiences, we take them for granted, and shouldn't, given the seemingly annual summer hepatits outbreak at your local Burger Barn.

Those who agree with me can voice as such to one JimGlatz@aol.com, the author of the above dissenting opinion. Regardless, if something's being done to your food, you want to know. And if some unspeakable act has indeed been performed to, in or on your meal, we want to know, too.



About eight years ago, my mom and I were eating at a restaurant in Pawtucket, Rhode Island. My mother had ordered a salad. She had started to eat the salad when she discovered an elastic in the salad. It wasn't a small elastic, but a huge one. When my mom complained to the waitress about it, the waitress laughed and said, "Oh, look, an elastic!" The waitress never even apologized to us. Needless to say, we didn't go back there anymore.

—*K.F.*



Okay, here's one for you (I would swear to it in a court of law) — check it out: My friend was chowing on some fast food chicken and bit into a cyst in this chicken piece. It exploded in his face and hot liquid covered the mouth area. A sick rash appeared on the face for about a week. Yep, they are vegetarian now. The cyst, I was told, would have been caused by the chemicals they pump into the chickens.

—*B.D.C.*

One time when I was at a famous pizza place, I was about to enjoy a piece of my pie when I spotted a roach on the pizza. It was still alive, so it was evident that it found its home next to my Canadian bacon after the pizza came out of the oven. I picked up the roach and put it on a napkin. I went over to show it to the manager who looked a lot like J.J. from *Good Times*. When I showed him the pest and explained that it was on my pizza, he said, "Well, dude, I guess I gotta charge you for another topping."

—*K.D.*

For a few months, I worked at an ice cream shop in a college town. There were a bunch of restaurants on the block, and we all shared the same problem: roaches. The exterminator would come in once a week to kill them. Once we found one *huge* friggin' dead roach, so he became the test pilot in our newest "roach shake." We didn't actually sell it to anybody, but we sure didn't clean the roach-parts off the milkshake maker.

—*J.P.*

Well, I used to work at a hamburger chain in Winnipeg, Manitoba, Canada. The establishment was at Grant Park. Many, many things happened at this restaurant that were considered quite "normal" at not only this restaurant, but at all Winnipeg restaurants (maybe even world, but I wouldn't know). I know this because of transfers to and from many Winnipeg restaurants, and the habits they would bring.

One of the most common things done is serving food too early, before it's done cooking. If a chicken patty or nuggets take five minutes to cook, managers or crew would pull it up in four minutes and serve it. If food in the cabinets expire or get cold, the cooking ovens provide a means of heating it up a little bit more so that the customers can't tell. Using buns and meat that are "waste" is unbelievably common. Changing timers in the bin extend the life of food from 7.5 minutes to 45 minutes. Improper storage of food results in thawing, refreezing, rethawing and re-refreezing, etc....Specifically at my restaurant, the daytime staff would have women with facial hair problems (four women was my last count) and facial hair would be commonly found in food, but managers could not bring themselves to inform the women of the problem for fear of embarassment. Food (especially buns) are sometimes dropped on the floor, and then picked up, brushed off and used. This is common for food that takes a few minutes to cook (filet, chicken, nuggets) or foods that remain in the same condition after being dropped (buns). Insect spray is used quite a bit, and although the management claims it is harmless, some people would experience nausea after eight hours of exposure to it during a shift.

—*R.P.*

1. Hairs found in my bean burrito: 2 times
2. Hairs found in my sourdough burger Melt: 1 time
3. Honestly, a true story: Ronald McDonald once tried to pick me up. He was doing a promotional for the 12,000th McDonald's restaurant (that's now considered a historical landmark) on Jerico Turnpike on Long Island, NY. I was with a couple of friends and he asked for my phone number. I get chills everytime I see a clown.
4. True story again: My husband and I went to Europe on our honeymoon, but after the plane tickets, all we could afford to do was eat at a hamburger chain (which still cost about $20, because the dollar sucks over there). Anyway, we were in Paris and trying to figure out how to say "bacon deluxe" in French. Fortunately for us, the girl spoke English and translated the menu for us. Except, of course, for the "pomme fritz" in England, "the chips" but in America, the "French fry" so we asked the girl for a "large French fry," the girl, assuming we were insulting her people, suddenly became very abrupt (of course, she was French, so she was abrupt even to begin with). We received our order sans French fries and with a huge, green, snot-filled wad of spittle in the center of the burger, which I checked, incidentally, to see if they use ketchup or mustard in France.

—*R.H.*

My family and I would go on vacation in Maine about twice a year, and one time when we went up there, we ate dinner with my aunt and uncle at an old-fashioned pizza place.

Hold the Lettuce

I, for one, have always wondered about the inside workings and goings-on of many Americans' favorite taco chain. So I decided to ask one of the corporation's minimum-wage employees to fill me in on all the gory details. His name is Derrick, but he wishes to remain anonymous due to the secrets he divulges, so we'll call him...oh, Teddy.

We'll also call the chain, say, Viva Taco. And since Viva Taco was, at the time of the interview, involved in a mega-exposure promotion with a major-studio blockbuster movie, instead of referring to that movie by its real title, we'll just be batty and call it *Summer Crap*.

HITCH: First of all, what's the deal with all the *Summer Crap* shirts?

Teddy: See, we're having this cup promotion. The shirts' promotin' the cups, the cups promotin' the movie and the movie makes millions. Should say *billions*. And it also promotes our new *Summer Crap* twists.

HITCH: Oh.

Teddy: You see, the object is to get the person enthused about Viva Taco, so we got *Summer Crap* cups, *Summer Crap* twists and employees dressed as *Summer Crap*. So they say, "Hey, *Summer Crap* was a great movie; let's order 20 tacos." It's a taco fiesta.

HITCH: Why do you put instructions on the soft taco wrapper telling consumers how to eat it?

Teddy: To show people how they work.

HITCH: Well, don't you think people are smart enough to figure it out for themselves? Eating a taco pretty much requires no thought.

Teddy: Well, we do it out of courtesy. Some people will eat it any old way, and I mean *any* old way. We show the most appropriate way. So if they do it wrong and it all falls apart, we say, "Well, you should have read the instructions."

HITCH: What do you get out of working for Viva Taco?

Teddy: Money. Moolah.

HITCH: Have you ever done any-

The restaurant made a big deal about how their pizzas were hand-made and slowly baked on a wood stove, dating back many years. They also used fine wood which, I guess, added to the flavor of the pizza. We ordered two pizza pies, and they were pretty good. We got to the final piece of the second pie, and we were deciding who got the honors of eating it. I then saw something and picked inside the crust of the pizza slice. My mom scolded me and told me not to touch the pizza unless I was going to eat it. I then pulled out a good-sized rusty nail from the pizza slice. Needless to say, we got our meal free and we never ate there again.

—A.B.

My friend worked at a family-style restaurant and he said that someone set a pot of soup on the ground and someone accidentally stepped in it and they served it anyway! Also, someone left one of those delicious pies out next to the dishwashing sink and he said soap and water and crud was getting all over it, but they still served it.

I worked at a pizza chain. We invented what we called the "two-second rule." If food landed on the ground, as long as we picked it up in two seconds, it was okay.

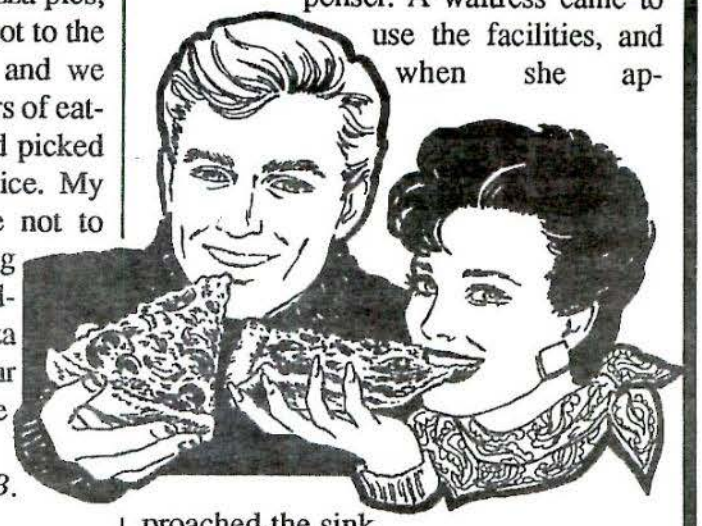
My girlfriend's dad was eating a salad at this restaurant and there was a bloody Band-Aid in his food!

That's all I can think of right now, but I know there is some story someone told me involving sperm and a taco place, but I can't remember the details.

—E.B.

An old college friend of mine, now a television news/sports personality for a CBS affiliate, had a very horrific dining experience recently. He was dining in a restaurant in Morgantown, W.Va. and was horrified beyond belief when he discovered part of a finger in his salad. He has since filed a complaint against the restaurant and, I assume, has met with an attorney regarding the incident. Just a few weeks ago, I heard that the restaurant offered him $50 to settle his complaint.

There have been so many times when I've found hairs in food at restaurants. Just two weeks ago, I was at a college "hangout" in Boulder, Co. where I visited the ladies' room. I was very upset that there was not any soap in the soap dispenser. A waitress came to use the facilities, and when she approached the sink to wash her hands, I informed her that there wasn't soap. She then said, "Oh, well, I'll tell the management." She then left the ladies room and continued to serve food to customers. In hindsight, I should have notified the management or the health department, but at the time I was seriously feeling the effects of a couple of monster beers.



—S.K.

A few months ago here in Phoenix, there was a story of a couple of kids who were arrested after a policeman caught them spitting into his roast beef sandwich. The most scary part is that his partner had already finished his sandwich when they were caught, and the police do not know if the kids spit into his sandwich.

I had a friend once who worked at the most expensive restaurant in Salt Lake City, and she told me that they once caught two of the cooks jacking off into the cream soup.

—D.H.

A Chinese restaurant in Ohio was cited by the health department for their cabbage practices. In order to crush cabbage for the spring rolls, they would put the heads between sheets of plywood and run an Oldsmobile over it.

—R.M.

Both from the same burger joint here in West Austraila:

1. Whenever one girl who worked

there had a cold, she would make sure to spit in every burger. Since the 34° C temperature of the burger is juuust right for viral replication, I (and they) expect that every single person who hadn't had that particular cold yet would have caught it. Yum yum.

2. The manager was caught commiting unspeakable acts into the mayonnaise and fired. The shop is now a McDonald's.

Me, I never eat *anywhere* that doesn't have good labor relations or where I can't see the food being prepared.

—D.G.

My cousin ordered a burger at a hamburger chain a few weeks ago, and within half an hour, she had to be rushed to the hospital. Apparently, this place decided to try to imitate McDonald's "special sauce" a little too hard. Seriously, she almost died from the rat poison that was in the food, and had to have all sorts of neat things done to ensure her speedy recovery.

—A.H.

Well...let me get the ball rolling here with a personal experience from my favorite fast food haunt,

where I worked as a cook through most of my high school years (only three of 'em) and worked the graveyard shift in the summers. Now, most of the employees there are of two varieties: high school kids and career fast food drones (which is more pathetic?). One guy I worked with, a high school pal of mine, was a fairly heavy smoker and would frequently walk out back to enjoy a cancer stick or three.

One evening, I yelled back at him to join me on the line. It was getting fairly busy and some unsuspecting customers wanted some of those tasty omelettes the place famous for (yeah, right). My friend was pissed that he didn't get to finish his cig, so he brought it up to the line with him. Then he proceeded to flick the ashes into all nine omelettes he was working on.

He turned to me and said, "Extra flavor, for no extra charge. You're going someplace special." I laughed for an hour.

Years later, I told my wife this story while we were eating there, and she won't eat there again.

—K.K.

About six years ago, when I was a junior in high school, a friend and I went to a hamburger chain in Pennsylvania. My friend ordered some chicken sandwich, and we sat eating and talking for a few minutes. Suddenly, however, she started to choke and gag. I rushed across the table and did the Heimlich and out flew a fake fingernail, complete with polish and a gold "B" pasted on it. We called the manager over to the table and showed him the fingernail, and he pulled us aside and said, "You little bitches better get out of here before I call the police. Don't try to make trouble in *my* store." We called a lawyer who told us we had a good case, but my friend never did anything about it.

That same year in school, I sat behind a guy that worked for a pizza chain in Pennsylvania. The following is all I can remember from what he told us. (I swear to God, I am not making *any* of this up. I stopped eating pizza forever after this.)

1. He and his friends would shit and piss in the sauce bucket.

2. They would catch mice on the sticky paper mouse traps and torture the mouse, then pull its legs off and put the mouse in the sauce bucket.

3. Dirty mop strings, baked right into the cheese. He did this to the pizza of a nerd that he knew from school. The kid never noticed the strings.

4. Semen in the dough (take a wild guess how *that* happened).

5. Broken glass shards in the sauce.

6. Insects in the dough and sauce.

I can't even tell this in story form, it's thing sick to the food?

Teddy: One time, this guy – I didn't like him – I spit in his cup. I mean, I got it all from up here (*points to his sinuses*), all that mucus. And he drunk it.

HITCH: What else?

Teddy: I dropped a soft taco and a burrito on the ground, and I didn't wipe it off. I only done it twice, though.

HITCH: What have some other employees done to the food?

Teddy: Put their hand in the food to test how hot it is and their hands are real grubby.

HITCH: What else?

Teddy: Wipe their face and keep making food. You know, like pick a booger and get some lettuce.

HITCH: *In one sentence*, how would you describe your overall experience of Viva Taco?

Teddy: I would have to say (*long pause*)...unorganized. They're unorganized, yet satisfying, you know. Unorganized, but satisfying. You know what I mean? I mean, they're not organized and all, but the day goes by fast, and that's satisfying. What I hate is when I come in and it's all fucked up. So, therefore, it's like they won't do it unless I'm there. You know what I'm saying? It's really fucked....You know that food will kill you? That's junk.

HITCH: Well, you're peddling it.

Teddy: yeah, but I'm getting *paid* to peddle it.

—Rod Lott

The Lobster Chronicles

You know, as much as I love doing **HITCH**, I've had other jobs, too. In fact, in the summer of 1990, I was a waiter at an inexplicably popular seafood restaurant for exactly three working days. I spent more days in training (five) than I actually did on the floor. That vigorous, week-long training session kicked off with a solid day of watching training videos, which were pretty damn hilarious. I wasn't until I donned my cheap-fabric apron, however, when I saw the face of food horrors rear its ugly head.

My first real day was odd, especial-

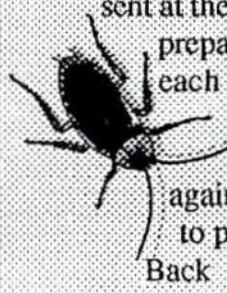
ly when one waitress grabbed a shrimp cocktail from the refrigerator. With the shrimp appearing rotten, she sniffed it, determined it had indeed seen its edible days come to a close, and threw it in the trash.

The manager watching her didn't seem to agree. "What the hell are you doing?" he barked. "Get that out of there!"

So she picked the six pieces of shrimp from within the barrel of stinking refuse, placed them back on the dish and trotted the delightful appetizer straight out to her awaiting customer.

Truth be told, I never saw any of the waiters I worked with those three nights wash their hands even once, and I should know, because I spent most of the time back in the "alley" (where the food is sent from the kitchen to the wait staff) where the only accessible sink was. A waiter's mitts get extremely dirty and greasy after only a few minutes' work, and they touch everyone's food, yet they're too busy running around fetching peppermills to periodically soap up those grungy digits.

Furthermore, rarely were tongs present at the area where the waiters prepared the free salads for each of their customers. Please read the above paragraph again for this alarming fact to properly sink in.



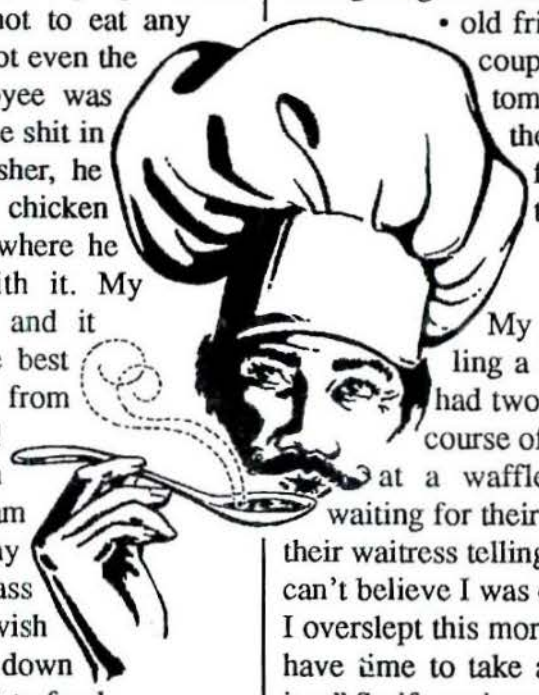
Back in that alley, if they dropped food on the floor – which usually was wet in several spots, not to mention shoe-sticky all over – they had no qualms about picking it up and returning it to the plate. One guy there dropped a whole tub of clean, still-wet silverware fresh from the washing machine onto the floor, and picked them all up before rolling them up in napkins for the customers to dine with.

Yum yum. Ahoy, mates! —*RL*

Do you have any first-hand accounts of fast-food or restaurant horrors? Don't hesitate to send them in! Our address can be found on page 2.

so disgusting. I think about this kid and I hope he ended up in prison, where he belonged.

One more: My best friend worked at a chicken place in Boston last year. When he got the job, the people at the place warned him not to eat any food cooked there, not even the chicken. One employee was befouling the food: he shit in the giant potato masher, he wiped snots on the chicken and he pissed everywhere he could get away with it. My friend met the kid and it turned out to be the best friend of the psycho from the pizza place! Instead of letting him get away with it, I am happy to say that my friend kicked his ass and got him fired. I wish someone sat them down and made them eat dirty food.



—*L.B.*

My wife and I were recently having lunch at a country-style restaurant when a really fat guy wearing a too-small purple sweatsuit came out of the bathroom. When he opened the restroom door, a smell of death and decay filled the restaurant — a smell that seemed to encompass all that is unpleasant about being human.

Shortly afterward came the overpowering smell of industrial disinfectant — a kind of ominous adult bookstore smell.

There isn't much to this story. My wife and I kept looking at each other and bursting out laughing during the meal. No one else in the restaurant seemed to notice these smells.

—*F.D.*

Here's a few things that happened while I worked in a fast food seafood place in Harrisonburg, Va. I worked up front, but knew all of the guys that worked in the back. Working there, you learned to make your own food instead of asking one of the guys because of what they may do to it.

A few examples:

• dropping uncooked fish on the floor, then picking it right up and dropping it in the fryer to be cooked;

• dropping cooked fish on the floor, then picking it up, sticking it on a plate and serving it to the next customer;

• not liking someone who came in, spitting on the food they bought and then giving it to them; and

• old fries sitting there for a couple hours, when customers come in, redrop them in the oil for a few minutes to make them hot.

—*J.T.*

My parents were travelling a few years back, and had two horror stories in the course of one day. They were at a waffle-house-type place, waiting for their food, and overheard their waitress telling another waitress, "I can't believe I was out so late last night. I overslept this morning and didn't even have time to take a shower this morning." So if you imagine the average waffle-house waitress, and then picture her with one less shower, you get a good idea of the situation.

That night, they were in a small restaurant and had ordered sandwiches and, after close to 20 minutes, were wondering why the food was taking so long. The waitress came out and said that she was sorry the sandwiches were taking so long, but that the cook had just cut his thumb off slicing the meat for their sandwiches.

—*J.C.*

This is really disgusting and probably offensive to some, but here goes: I have been a server for more than 10 years and heard this from a fellow server, Craig, a male college student. Seems he was being constantly plagued by a particularly rude and demanding customer – one who obviously wasn't thinking about how people should be nice to those who have access to their food.

Before Craig served this man his key lime pie, Craig took the pie into the bathroom and rubbed a certain sweaty, oblong part of his anatomy on the pie, then served it with much satisfaction.

This stuff happens all the time, but maybe not to such a disgusting degree. I work in a well-known and popular chain, and see food spit in and dropped

on the floor all the time.

If you treat your servers as fellow humans, you have nothing to worry about. I have never done anything like this personally, though I have fantasized plenty when being treated like a fool.

—*K.S.*

A girl friend of mine was ordering food at a burger chain, looked up and saw a mouse crawling around in the ceiling light.

—*J.M.*

My friend found a toenail (I still think it was an onion, but oh well) in her burrito, and my soon-to-be ex-friend, who is a hysterical maniac, found a lugie that some little prankster had hacked into her Sprite! The Sprite had been sucked down when she removed the lid, in hopes of crunching some ice, and found the offensive piece of phlegm parked atop a cube of ice.

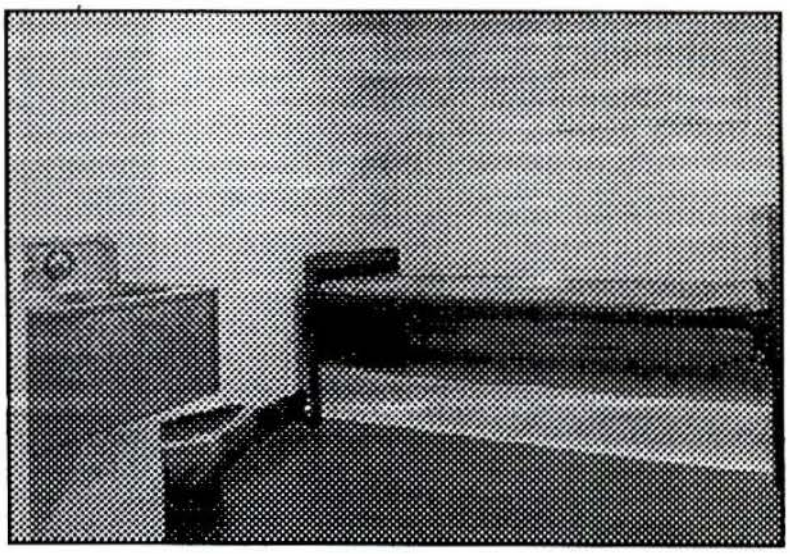
It was a karma-ish moment. She'd sullied my reputation a year before. And they say there is no justice.

—*A.L.H.*

H

HITCH's Fall Preview

By Steve Hunt

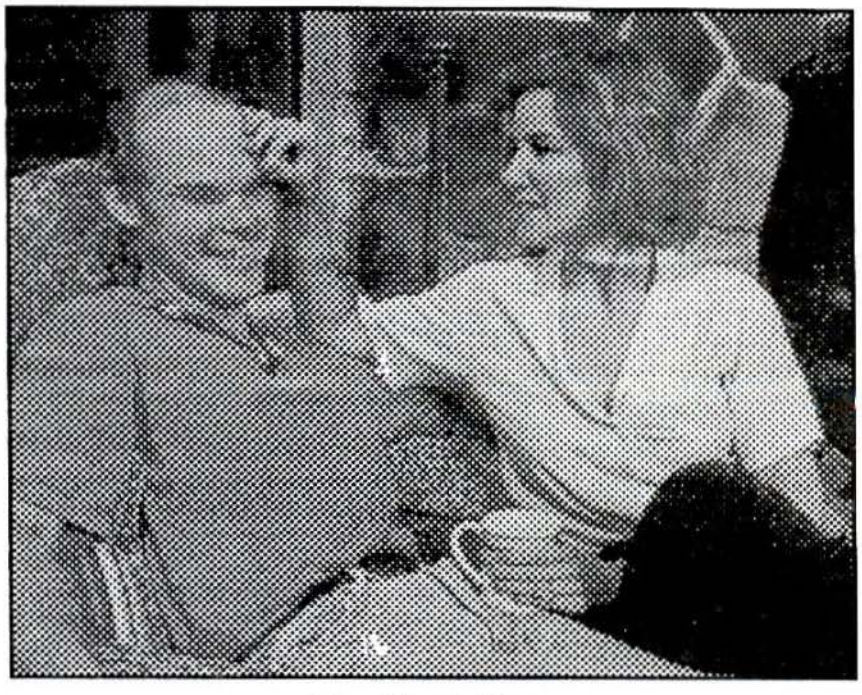


The Empty Cell

The stunning CBS mini-series portrays a prison cell emptied for reasons to be disclosed later in the show.

Dinosaur Town

Tom (Hal Linden) and Sally (Suzanne Pleschette) Cliffwood enjoy breakfast as dinosaurs wreak havoc outside their home.



Mr. Sloth Eyes

"I will fix your sloth eyes, Todd. I will fix your sloth eyes if it's the last thing I do!" Anne Smith promises her husband Todd, in this heartwarming dramedy that families can look forward to cherishing for years to come.

the McDonald's FAQ

This list of questions and answers is intended to help the reader learn a few basic things about McDonald's and its food.

1. *What is McDonald's?*

McDonald's is an international restaurant business, with franchises and owner-operated stores throughout the world, if not the universe. There are more than 15,000 locations in 79 countries, and a new McDonald's restaurant opens every 13 hours. Eighty-five percent of the restaurants are independently owned and operated, with company-run stores making up the other 15 percent. Stock increased by 16 percent in 1994, and 25 percent of all McDonald's stock is owned by employees, licensees, and suppliers.

2. *Who founded McDonald's?*

McDonald's was founded in San Bernadino, Calif. by two brothers, Maurice and Richard McDonald, in 1937. Ray Kroc was a Multimixer (for shakes) salesman in 1954 when he came across McDonald's (he supplied their multimixers). He was in awe of their efficient, cheap, popular and profitable operation. Although he wasn't the only one to franchise the McDonald's name, he was the only one who was was a stickler for what made the original work, and was by far the most successful. The Kroc-run stores started up in the Chicago area in 1955. Ray Kroc was a bit of a weirdo. His excitement for buisness and food shows in this statement in his autobiography: "It was not her sex appeal but the obvious relish with which she devoured the hamburger that made my pulse begin to hammer with exitement."

3. *What characters are associated with McDonald's?*

Well, many, actually. Most famous is Ronald McDonald, a clown who frequents McDonald's apparantly quite often, and loves kids. McDonald's also has characters associated with its various products. Mayor McCheese, the Mayor of McDonaldland, has a head shaped like a cheeseburger. Big Mac, a policeman character, has a head shaped like a Big Mac sandwich. Grimace, a purple, endearing blob character, loves McDonald's milkshakes. According to the "Straight Dope" syndicated column, which quoted McDonald's spokeswoman Jane Hulbert, Grimace is a "big fuzzy purple fellow...[who] personifies the child in everyone...He is Ronald's special pal. Everyone loves Grimace because of his innocent loving nature. He occasionally causes trouble in McDonaldland because he is clumsy, but his friends overlook this because he is so happy." Grimace is *not* related to Barney! Grimace was originally called the Evil Grimace. He had a penchant for stealing milkshakes from small children. Consider the definition of grimace: "A sharp contortion of the face expressive of pain, contempt, or disgust" (from *The American Heritage Dictionary*). Fry Guys, little mophead-like things, love McDonald's fries, as do their counterparts, Fry Gals. And Captain Crook is the hero of the Filet-O-Fish sandwich. There is Birdie the Early Bird, who was introduced when breakfast began being served at

McDonald's, and of course, the villianous Hamburglar, who steals hamburgers from McDonald's (but can you blame him?).

4. *Wow! That's a lot!*

Yes, it is. There is also an alien character, CosMc, but he is unimportant. Also, there was a character called Mac Tonight who had a head shaped like the moon and sang a theme song to the tune of "Mack the Knife."

5. *Who was the orginal Ronald?*

Famed weatherman Willard Scott. In the very first Ronald McDonald commercial, with Willard Scott as Ronald (circa 1960), he actually says something to the effect of "I know you're not supposed to talk to strangers, kids, but it's okay to talk to me, because I'm Ronald the hamburger-loving clown!"

6. *What products does McDonald's serve?*

Well, among other things, most American McDonald's have:

BREAKFAST:

• Egg McMuffin – Canadian bacon, egg and cheese on an English muffin.

• Big Breakfast – sausage or bacon, eggs, hash brown, etc.

• Hot Cakes – pancakes.

• Sausage Biscuit – sausage patty on a biscuit.

• Sausage and Egg Biscuit – like Sausage Biscuit, but with egg.

• Bacon Egg and Cheese Biscuit – biscuit with a circle of bacon, a slice of cheese and egg.

• Danish – usually cheese or apple pastry, though other flavors are available.

• Hash Brown – deep-fried potatoes patty.

• Breakfast Burrito – a concoction made of eggs which is only vaguely Mexican; contains green chiles, onions, diced tomatoes, peppers, American cheese, eggs and diced sausage.

• Orange Juice, Coffee, Coke, Diet Coke, Sprite, Orange Drink, Milk, Iced Tea, Hot Tea and other beverages.

LUNCH / DINNER:

•Big Mac – McD's trademark sandwich of two all-beef patties, special sauce, lettuce, cheese, pickles and onions on a sesame-seed bun. The Big Mac was invented in 1974 by a Pittsburgh store owner to counter other chains large sandwiches (e.g. Burger King's Whopper). The buns in a Big Mac are, from top to bottom, the crown, club and heel.

• Filet-o-Fish – North Atlantic cod patty with cheese and tartar sauce. The Filet-o-Fish was invented in 1965 by store owner Louis Groen in Cincinnati to counter the fish sandwich at Bob's Big Boy on Fridays (Cincinnati had a large Catholic population).

• Hamburger – small 100-percent beef patty with onions, pickle, ketchup and mustard.

• Cheeseburger – above, w/ a slice of American cheese.

Quarter Pounder – 1/4 lb beef before cooking, w/ onions, and usually cheese.

• McChicken Sandwich – chicken fillet with mayo and lettuce, related to Cajun Style McChicken and • McGrilled Chicken Classic.

• McDLT – 1/4 lb. of beef, had tomato and lettuce in one side of a styrofoam container, and beef in the other side, but no longer avaliable in this fashion.

• McLean – 91% fat free burger, made with carrageenan (a seaweed deriviative) topped with ketchup, mustard, relish, onions, pickles, tomatoes and lettuce.

• McRib – processed pork, shaped like ribs, with BBQ sauce.

• Chicken McNuggets – processed chicken nuggets, with honey, BBQ, sweet & sour and hot mustard dipping sauces.

• Chicken Fajitas – spicy strips of chicken with peppers, etc. in a flour tortilla.

• Daily Double – two small all-beef patties, lettuce, tomato, cheese and mayo, not available in all areas.

• McPizza – a decent pizza with cheese, pepperoni and the works, not available in all areas.

• Happy Meals – kid-sized portions of either cheeseburger, hamburger, McNuggets or McPizza, with McDonaldland Cookies, small fries, a drink and a cheap toy.

DESSERT:

• Hot Apple Pie – this baked concoction pales in comparison to its predeccessor, a deep-fried, piping-hot, delicious concoction.

• Soft-Serve Cones – small, inexpensive frozen yogurt, in chocolate, vanilla or both.

• Sundaes – great-tasting hot-fudge, caramel, butterscotch or strawberry sundaes, with nuts if requested.

• Chocolatey Chip Cookies – chocolate chip cookies.

• McDonaldland Cookies – shortbread cookies in the shapes of McDonaldland characters.

• Milkshakes – vanilla, strawberry or chocolate, with seasonal ones like Arctic Orange, Grape and the *incredible* Shamrock Shake.

McDonald's also has temporary offers, such as the McJordan, Double and Triple Cheeseburgers, Double Quarter Pounder with Cheese, etc.

7. *Wow! How many calories in all that food?*

Exact nutritional numbers (including vitamins, fat, protien, carbohydrates, etc.) can be found at any restaurant in the pamphlet section. As a basic rule though, all the entrees (and the fries) except for the McGrill and McDLT have approximately 50 percent of calories from fat!

8. *What is the special sauce?*

The special sauce appears to be a mixture of mayonaisse, ketchup and relish. It is akin to Thousand Island dressing.

9. *Does the beef for the hamburgers come from the rainforests?*

In the U.S., only 100 percent American beef is used. In other countries, McDonald's tries to use beef of that country. So you'll probably only get a "rainforest" hamburger in Brazil! Actually, McDonald's does *not* use rainforest meat whatsoever. Anyone telling you different is lying.

10. *Does McDonald's offer free refills?*

Yes. Some places may not advertise it, but if you bring your cup to the counter and remove the lid for them, they are supposed to give you a free refill (except in several European countries).

Also, McDonald's may be making a switch to self-serve fountain drinks in the near future.

11. *What is "Q-ing," and how can I make sure my sandwich doesn't get "Q-d"?*

"Q-ing" is the McDonald's term for microwaving (the Q stands for "quality"). Recently, McDonald's has been taking sandwiches that were special-ordered (i.e., extra cheese, etc.) and sticking them in the Q-er to make them hot. The sandwiches get hot, but let's face it: We don't go to McDonald's for microwaved food! To get a special order, order it and say, "Do not microwave this sandwich in the Q-er. I want it made the old way, fresh off the grill." Then, if they microwave it (if you can't tell the difference, then don't worry about it), take it back and say, "I asked that this sandwich not be Q-d. Please remake it the way I asked." This may seem extreme, but you have to be assertive to get what you want in this world!

12. *Where is the largest McDonald's in the world?*

The McDonald's in Beijing, China, is 28,000 square feet, stands two stories tall, seats 700 and employs 1,000. The Moscow McDonald's also seats 700.

13. *What is the corporate address of McDonald's?*

One McDonald's Plaza, Oak Brook, IL 60521. Telephone: (312) 575-3000. **H**

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NAME _____ FIRST NAME MIDDLE INITIAL LAST NAME

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CITY _____ STATE _____ ZIP _____ ARE YOU 18 OR OLDER? ☐ YES ☐ NO. IF NOT, AGE _____

EVER WORKED FOR McDONALD'S BEFORE? IF YES, DATES AND LOCATION _____

AVAILABILITY:

TOTAL HOURS AVAILABLE PER WEEK _____ HOURS AVAILABLE:

	M	T	W	T	F	S	S
FROM							
TO							

ARE YOU LEGALLY ABLE TO BE EMPLOYED IN THE U.S.? ☐ YES ☐ NO HOW DID YOU HEAR OF JOB? _____ HOW FAR DO YOU LIVE FROM STORE? _____ DO YOU HAVE TRANSPORTATION TO WORK? _____

SCHOOL MOST RECENTLY ATTENDED:

NAME _____ LOCATION _____ PHONE _____

TEACHER OR COUNSELOR _____ DEPT. _____ LAST GRADE COMPLETED _____ GRADE POINT AVERAGE _____

GRADUATED? ☐ YES ☐ NO NOW ENROLLED? ☐ YES ☐ NO SPORTS OR ACTIVITIES _____

RECENT JOB: (If not applicable, list work performed on a volunteer basis or personal references.)

COMPANY _____ LOCATION _____ PHONE _____

JOB _____ SUPERVISOR _____ DATES WORKED: FROM _____ TO _____

SALARY _____ REASON FOR LEAVING _____

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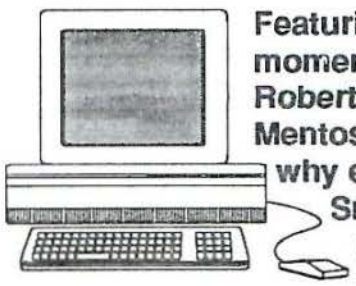
ITEM	CALORIES	CALORIES FROM FAT
Big Mac	490	49%
Quarter Pounder w/ Cheese	490	51%
McChicken	490	55%
McNuggets (9 pc.)	400	53%
McGrilled Chicken	400	28%
Filet-O-Fish	370	43%
McLean w/ Cheese	370	35%
Cheeseburger	300	40%
Hamburger	250	32%
Large Fries	425	50%
Shakes (small)		
• chocolate	350	17%
• strawberry	340	13%
• vanilla	310	15%

McCalorie Table

WHEN IN CYBERSPACE, VISIT

The HITCH World Wide Web Page!



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BACK ISSUES AVAILABLE

With the exception of a *very* limited few left, the following issues of **HITCH** are *no longer available*: 1, 2 and 3. If you are interested in these issues, still for $3.50 a piece, please write or e-mail us first so we can reserve them for you. The rest, listed below, are pretty much in abundance...for now.

#4 • DECEMBER 1994 / JANUARY 1995 • Meeting Moses: Chuck Heston talks to **HITCH** and we take a look back at his 1992 *Solar Crisis*, plus the *Taco Bueno* movie, a Casey Kasem prank, questioning the evil of those two annoying little girls from *Full House*, the wonderful world of workmen's comp, State Fair terrors, a holiday he-man experiment going undercover as bums, bachelorette parties and the now-infamous, really-works *free* **HITCH** dreidel. (40 pgs.)

#5 • FEBRUARY / MARCH 1995 • Our jam-packed *Prostate Awareness & Action Hero Spectacular*, in which we simultaneously ask Robert Goulet about his prostate and listen to kickboxer Don "The Dragon" Wilson say mean things about Van Damme. Plus, a he-man adventure at the 1992 Republican Convention, toys that inflict pain, an Adam West appreciation and our complete, step-by-step guide on how *you* can become an action hero. (52 pgs.)

#6 • APRIL / MAY 1995 • Excerpts from David Hasselhoff's *Baywatch* diary, the Mentos FAQ, the Sugar Bear/Dig 'Em conspiracy, Slim Goodbody's pet peeves, if cartoons were politically correct, the Village People live, the Rhino Fun Page and *Godzilla vs. Dirty Harry*. (36 pgs.)

#7 • JUNE / JULY 1995 • Our first anniversary issue, coinciding with National Hot Dog Month, features a kitsch retrospective on the *Planet of the Apes* phenomenon, a he-man adventure to the Grand Canyon, why the Academy Awards suck, getting up close and scary with Crispin Glover, a long column involving child scalpings, bachelor tips, the dirt on tattoo removal, plus two big freebies: 1) for the kids, **HITCH** pog milkcaps, and 2) for the adults, the Beat-O-Matic, Joycelyn Elders' wacky masturbation board game that *you* can play in the privacy of your own home! (40 pgs.)

Back issues: **$3.50** each. Subscriptions are **$20** for one year (six issues). All checks and money orders *must* be made payable to **Rod M. Lott**. Address on page 2.

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Face to Face with LEATHERFACE

By Rod Lott

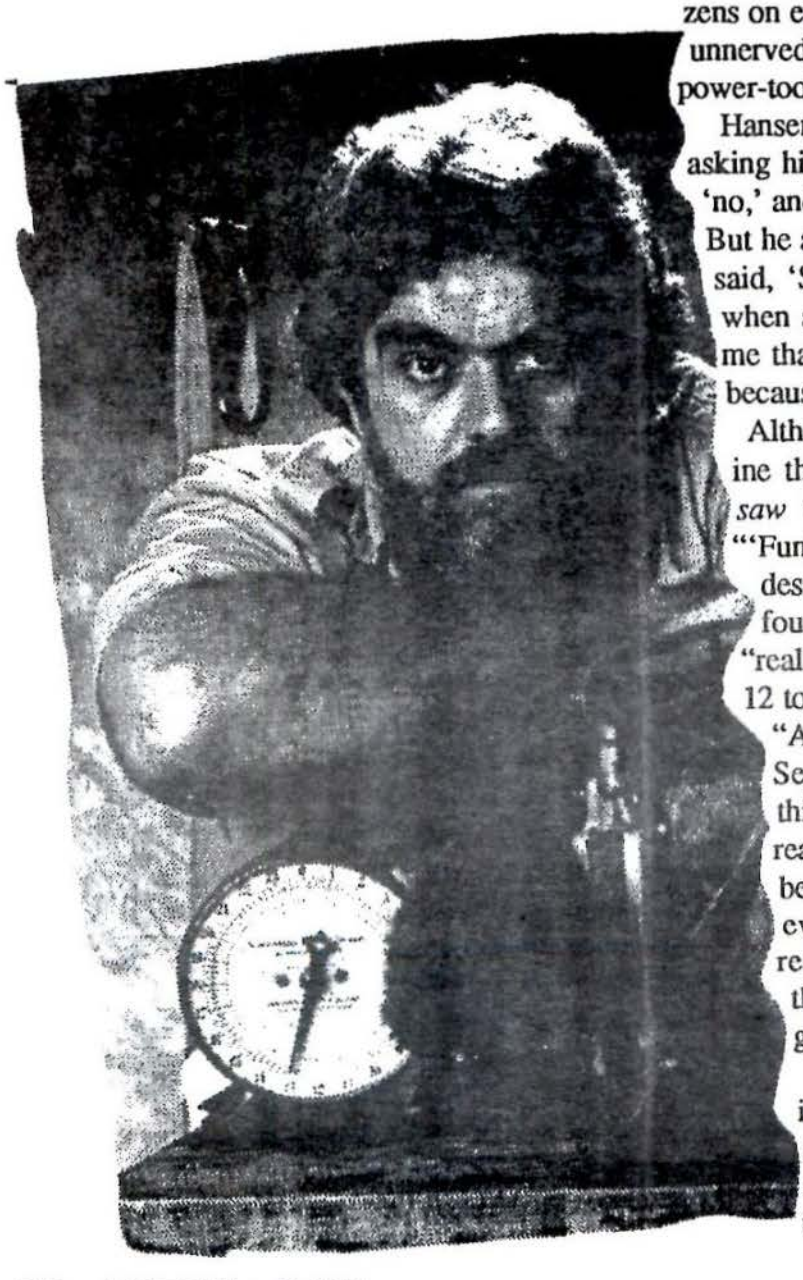
Though purely by accident, Gunnar Hansen's name has been cemented in the history of pop culture, yet he can walk the street unrecognized. And that's fine by him.

As Leatherface, the menacing figure lurking within the frames of the 1974 splatter classic *The Texas Chainsaw Massacre*, Hansen's mug was hidden by a mask supposedly fashioned from the skin of his many hapless victims. As the film grew into the cult phenomenon it remains today, Leatherface became an icon – a precursor to the likes of Freddy, Jason, Michael Myers and Pinhead – while the man behind the mask, who never intended to become an actor, roams free.

Born in Iceland in 1947, Hansen lived there before moving to the States when he was 5, growing up in San Antonio, Texas. Although not a drama major, he performed in a few plays and student films while in college at the University of Texas in Austin. One day, he ran into a friend and fellow castmate of his. Over a cup of coffee, his friend told him about a movie that was getting ready to be lensed in the area, and gave him the number of the casting director. So he called.

"When they said, 'We'll call you,' I thought that was it," Hansen said. "But two days later, I got the part. The tryouts weren't very hard. It was between me and another guy, but he was holed up drunk in some motel, so I won."

And the rest is history, all of which Hansen recounted to me as we sat in a Holiday Inn breakfast bar, and all while the senior citizens on either side of us trying to enjoy their Sunday morning sausage appeared unnerved by this burly, bearded man's table-talk of power-tool evisceration.



Hansen recalled *Chainsaw* director Tobe Hooper asking him if he was violent or crazy. "I answered 'no,' and he got a real worried look on his face. But he asked, 'Do you think you can do it?' and I said, 'Sure.' Later, though, at the signing party when all the cast signed their contracts, he told me that when I arrived, he knew he wanted me because I filled the door."

Although he said fans of the film often imagine the filming of the now-legendary *Chainsaw* to be fun, Hansen sees it differently. "'Fun' is about the last word I would use to describe that shoot," he said. Present for four of the six-week shoot, the process was "really grueling," occupying anywhere from 12 to 16 hours a day, seven days a week.

"And this was Texas in August and September, where every day was something like 95° to 100°," he said. "It was really exhausting, so to get into shape to be able to stand it, I decided to get up every morning at 5 and run a mile. I realized pretty quick those are two things a man should never have to do: get up at 5 and run a mile."

To make matters worse, Hooper insisted Hansen keep the Leatherface mask on at all times, unless a break ran over 15 minutes. Unfortunately, they almost never lasted more than

five.

"The mask was fairly fragile, so I had to keep it on between shots," he said. "The worst part was toward the end of the shoot when we shot the final sequence, the dinner scene. That took 26 hours to shoot, and I couldn't take this mask off. We filmed it in the day, so they had all the windows blacked out, and they had these huge lights which only made it hotter. We had a lot of food on the table like head cheese and a dead chicken, and that started to smell real bad. People kept on going outside to throw up. I didn't, but I had to go get fresh air, but that still didn't take the smell out of the mask. Plus, I think we were all pretty rank by then, too."

Leatherface's mask, of course, was not really made of human flesh, but of latex. According to Hansen, three different masks were used, with the most famous being the "killing mask." To make this one, assistant director Bob Burns took a mold of the executive producer's face and painted multiple layers of latex into the negative mold.

They did, however, use a real, working chainsaw, but in varying states. For most of the shots, a saw with the clutch removed was used so that the chain wouldn't run. Two other saws were fully operational. One had the teeth on its chain filed off, while the other was as dangerous a tool as Leatherface's on-screen victims might attest.

"It was only years later when I began to use a chainsaw to cut wood that I realized how extremely dangerous a chainsaw is," Hansen said. "I remember filming a scene when I was chasing someone through the woods in the dark, and I slipped and pitched the saw up. I looked up, but with the lights and the mask, I couldn't see it anywhere, so I just rolled up in a ball and covered my head. It landed right beside me.

"In the scene where I go to work on Bill Vail, just after Pam gets put on the hook, we were using the real one, because Tobe wanted people to see the thing binding down. The thing was only inches from his head, and I thought I could control it," he said. "Luckily, I did."

What with all the on-set vomiting and narrowly averted accidents, Hansen had no idea at the time that the low-budget film he was acting in would blossom later into a profitable and much-imitated cult classic.

"I think that Tobe and Kim (Henkel, who co-wrote the screenplay with Hooper) had dreams, and I suspect the reason they were doing it was so it would make a splash in their careers. I didn't," he said, confessing not to be much of a horror fan. "I'd seen films like *2,000 Maniacs* and *A Bucket of Blood*, and I grouped this in with those pictures. My opinion changed quickly when I took a pal out to show him where we had filmed it. We were standing there by the side of the road looking at it. Pretty soon, a carload full of teenage boys came, too. One of them turned to me and said, 'You know, that's where they made *that* movie.' And that's when I knew."

Despite *Chainsaw*'s success, Hansen did not reprise his role in any of the film's poorly received non-hit sequels, 1986's Hooper-directed *The Texas Chainsaw Massacre Part 2* or 1989's *Leatherface: The Texas Chainsaw Massacre 3*. He is also absent from this year's *The Taxidermist: Return of the Texas Chainsaw Massacre*, which recently wrapped in Austin. As he puts it, his donning the mask for another go-round was prevented by the inability to agree on terms with the filmmakers.

"The best way to say it is, when we were negotiating, we couldn't come to terms," he said. "And when I saw the end result, I was glad. Those films had a lot of problems, and I don't think they came anything close to the original in terms of power."

Likewise, he said, Hooper's problem is that his first film was also his best. The critical and commercial response to most of his post-*Chainsaw* efforts, including 1985's *Lifeforce* and 1995's *The Mangler*, have been disappointing. In addition, the rumors that Steven Spielberg actually directed most of *Poltergeist* continue to haunt Hooper's reputation.

"It must be hard for Tobe," he said of his former boss, whom he's seen once since their flick together was finished. "None of his films since have had the power of *Chainsaw*. One of his follow-up films, *Eaten Alive*, with Neville Brand as basically the chef from *Chainsaw*, seemed to me an attempt to recreate *Chainsaw*."

However, he has high praise for Hooper's directorial skills.

"I liked working for him. He was very intense. He got out of us exactly what he wanted," he said. "Of course, that was my first film, so I didn't have anything to judge him against, but we were willing to do anything for him. When I got hurt on the set, he was first to see that I got help. I last saw him at a convention a few months ago. We had a nice meeting and reminisced, but I didn't feel a need to get his address or call him up or anything like that."

Following *Chainsaw*, Hansen made one film – 1977's *Demon Lover*, directed by *Roller Blade*'s Donald G. Jackson – before taking a self-imposed exile from acting. At one time a graduate student at UT's creative writing program, he decided to pursue his first love: writing, a field he has worked steadily in for the past 19 years. Among his 40-plus publication credits include articles in such magazines as *Texas Monthly*, *Writer's Digest* and *Yankee*. He has published a volume of poetry and two history books – all of which are the kind "that the bookstores never know where to put" – and recently completed a non-fiction book titled *Things Only the Killer Knew*, about accused serial killer Henry Lee Lucas.

His decision to tackle writing as a full-time job was why he gave up acting. "I had to decide whether to struggle to be successful at writing or as an actor, and for me, it was a very easy decision to make," he explained. "I was not going to let working in films get in the way of my writing, and I was very leery of the film business, anyway."

He stuck to his commitment, even when Burns called and offered him a part in Wes Craven's *The Hills Have Eyes* (1977). He turned it down.

"That was my last flirtation with film for 12 years," Hansen said.

That was when Fred Olen Ray, the man behind *Bad Girls from Mars* and *Dinosaur Island*, called Hansen eight years after meeting him on the set of *Demon Lover*.

"He called out of the blue and said, 'Gee, we're making a movie and I want

you to be it,'" Hansen recalled. "I said I wanted to see a script first, and Fred said it was being rewritten. When he said that, I assumed he meant he wasn't going to have a script unless I consented to be in it, so I said yes, but told him I wouldn't sign a contract until the script came."

That film was 1988's homicidal prostitute movie *Hollywood Chainsaw Hookers*, a film he characterized as "a picture you wouldn't like unless you're into either campy movies or Fred Olen Ray," which is redundant. "It was kind of a spoof of '60s British horror films, in which I played a swarthy gentleman of unknown Middle Eastern origin who's leading a cult in East Los Angeles."

He spent three days of a Memorial Day weekend on the seven-day shoot. The first day, virtually no one but the director spoke to him. It wasn't until day two that he found out why.

"One of the effects of me getting out of acting for a while was that I really didn't realize how bigger and bigger *Chainsaw* had become. I had no clue. It was only when I went out to L.A. to do *Hookers* that I realized what a mystery I was," he said. "On the second day of shooting, Michelle Bauer came up to me and said, 'You know, you're really a nice guy. We all expected you to be a real asshole.'

"It was then that I noticed nobody on the set had spoken to me the day before, except Fred and Jay Richardson, who had the lead. Even the guy who picked me up from the airport was not working on the movie, which I thought was unusual, and I wondered if it was maybe because nobody wanted to volunteer to come get me," he said.

After Bauer broke the ice, though, the remaining half of his time there went fine. "Fred is pretty intense, too," he said. "He shoots fast. I was given the script right before I had to go before the camera. I didn't have time to learn my lines or get a grasp on my character."

In his most recent film, *Mosquito*, he plays the main villain, aside from the giant, 6-ft. titular insects that plague the picture. Hansen enjoyed the part, because it was a different type of role for him, in that even though he was the bad guy, he was not as tough as he made himself out to be. Unfortunately, most of the small bits of humor his character were taken out in the edit for pacing's sake.

"I still come across as a nasty guy, but it's not as funny as it was intended to be," he said, comparing the film to the tongue-in-cheek *Tremors*, the Kevin Bacon-vs.-the-worms movie that was a jokey homage to the monster movies of the '50s. Ron Asheton, best known as the guitarist for the punk outfit the Stooges – which beget Iggy Pop – costars in *Mosquito* as the comic-relief park ranger.

Hansen recently finished *Freakshow*, an anthology film produced by the same men who cast him in an earlier anthology film called *Campfire Tales*. In *Freakshow*, he appears in the wraparound segments as "the Freakmaster." The premise sends a bunch of guys to a carnival, where they patronize the freakshow tent. Hansen introduces each of the four freaks whose stories comprise the film.

"It was a painless picture to do," he said. "A lot of people struggle for years before getting another picture going. But with these guys, it was immediate. They were happy with *Campfire Tales* and wanted me to do this, too. It was shot very fast, and went very well."

Next up for Hansen is an action film, *Exploding Angel*, and then perhaps a reunion with his *Mosquito* director for a thriller named *Icebound*. He has several other projects in the preliminary talking stages right now, but is not overly hopeful any of them will see the light of day. "You can talk to 10 producers and only one of them might actually have a picture come out," he said.

In the meantime, he's focusing his talents on documentary filmmaking. Originally, he took up magazine writing as a way to earn a living while learning the craft, never intending to devote his life to it. However, it led him toward scriptwriting for documentaries.

Although never a household name, Hansen may never be able to escape the legend he help create.

Today, he lives in a small village in Maine, where he believes some of his neighbors know who he is, but choose not to care.

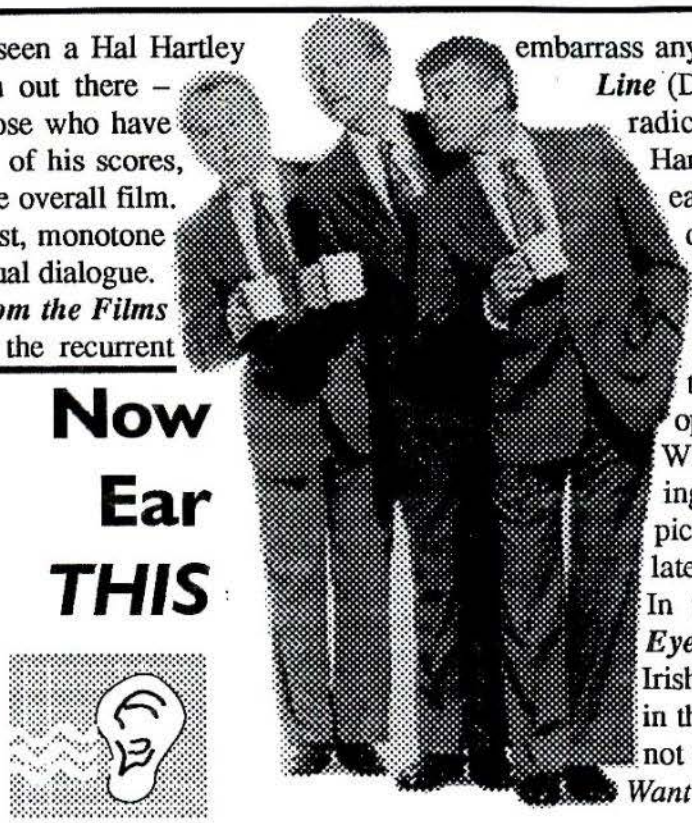
"I like the fact that people really don't know," he said. "It's nice for privacy. I'm not accosted on the street. Only twice have people recognized me from my name, both from my credit card. One of the guys gave me my card back and shook my hand. I thought, 'Man, these clerks are very friendly.'"

Even his mom, who lives in Texas, has not been immune to her son's enduring myth.

"She was at a store once and the guy, I guess, recognized the last name," Hansen explained. "He looked at her and asked, 'Are you Leatherface's mom?' She thought that was funny. 'Yep, that's my boy. I always knew he'd make good.'"

H

Now Ear THIS



For those of you who've never seen a Hal Hartley film – and there are plenty of you out there – you've got a lot of work to do. Those who have have no doubt long cherished a CD of his scores, which lend a lot of atmosphere to the overall film. Often, the music is just as minimalist, monotone and somehow refreshing as his unusual dialogue.

True Fiction Pictures: Music from the Films of Hal Hartley compiles many of the recurrent themes from all but his new *Amateur*, including *The Unbelievable Truth*, *Trust*, *Simple Men* and a pair of his short subjects. Perfectly capturing a wide range of moods in a minute-long guitar riff, Hartley's scores have an uncanny ability to almost simutaneously push you into a spell of far-reaching depression before yanking you right back out on a note of maudlin optimism.

Also featured are Ether's ethereal French-songbird number from *Surviving Desire*, the Brothers Kendall's "Good Intentions" and a pair of tunes from indie fave Yo La Tengo. Aside from Hartley's hauntingly hopeful end credits to *Trust*, the highlights of the album are three cuts by Hub Moore and the Great Outdoors, who sound like the most polished and lyrical garage band you've ever heard. From their spirted "Walk Away" to the infectious "Mess with Me," Moore and his cohorts provide a fine balance among Hartley's instrumentals.

My new favorite album of the moment, I listened to this no less than a dozen times through the first week I had it. Available only through mail-order, this CD is a must for any Hartley fan. Send $15 (certified check or money order only) to True Fiction Pictures, 12 W. 27th, 10th Floor, New York, NY 10001.

❦ ❦ ❦

In interpreting a whole album's worth of material by "Austin's resident Forrest Gump," Glass Eye refugee Kathy McCarty produces a uniquely original work, displaying both the talents of singer and subject. The best cuts from ***Dead Dog's Eyeball: Songs of Daniel Johnston*** (Bar None) are the ones in which Johnston bares the extent of his seriousness, and McCarty her understanding by delivering the message with little more than her voice. "Living Life" and "Hey Joe" – hopeful and touching, respectively, particularly with the latter's haunting refrain of *"There's a heaven / There's a star for you"* – fall into this category. Even the more upbeat tunes like "Monkey in a Zoo" hint at their songwriter's playful, yet tortured, genius.

***Straight* Man: David Lewis**

English folkie David Lewis does not embarrass anyone in his debut outing, ***No Straight Line*** (DejaDisc). Previously known as a sporadic collaborator with John Wesley Harding, Lewis delivers a stripped-down earthiness with Harding on hand as producer. Their excellent duet, "The End of Something," from Harding's 1993 *Pett Levels* EP, reappears here, projecting an amazing resonance that echoes throughout, especially on the disc's opener, the travel-inspired "Due South." While not as fresh, clever or commanding as his pal Wes, Lewis admirably picks up on a style of folk not heard from lately, and runs with it.

In their second post-Sire release, ***Wide Eyed and Ignorant*** (Radioactive), the Irish power-pop outfit A House have turned in their finest and most cohesive work yet, not an easy feat when matched to 1990's *I Want Too Much*. *Ignorant* kicks off with one hell of a fun-sounding single, "The Strong and the Silent." So contagious is its relentlessly delirious beat that it wasn't 'til a 20th listen that I realized it addresses the no-fun issue of domestic violence. That is a testament to the band's creativity, reaffirmed by the upbeat "Here Come the Good Times," as well as the more somber (but no less brilliant) "Why Me?" and "She Keeps Me Humble."

Those dreadfully shoddy K-Tel compilations are mercilessly parodied in Pravda's ***20 More Explosive Fantastic Rockin' Mega Smash Hit Explosions!***, the finest hour of which finds John Wesley Harding and Kelly Hogan turning the Osmonds' "A Little Bit Country, A Little Bit Rock 'N' Roll" into a '90s style, drug-addled duel of the sexes. Milo Binder turns the volume down on ABBA's "Dancing Queen" and unearths a quiet pop gem, a band called Enormous Richard reveal their ballerina dreams in "Music Box Dancer," while Goober and the Peas assail the inane sappiness of "MacArthur Park." The Smithereens put a faithful coat of polish to Ringo Starr's "It Don't Come Easy," but lesser efforts by unknowns like the Dayglo Abortions put a damper on the otherwise joyous proceedings.

Finally, Capitol has released a pair of excellent greatest-hits discs, so relive the Beatlesesque harmonies of ***The Best of Badfinger*** and relish the bar-band glories of the underrated Smithereens on ***Blown to Smithereens: Best of The Smithereens***.

My vote for two of the 50 greatest songs of all-time: the Cyrkle's bouncy "Red Rubber Ball" and the Left Banke's lithesome "Walk Away Renee," but put a Congressional ban on anything by the Eagles or the Doobie Brothers.

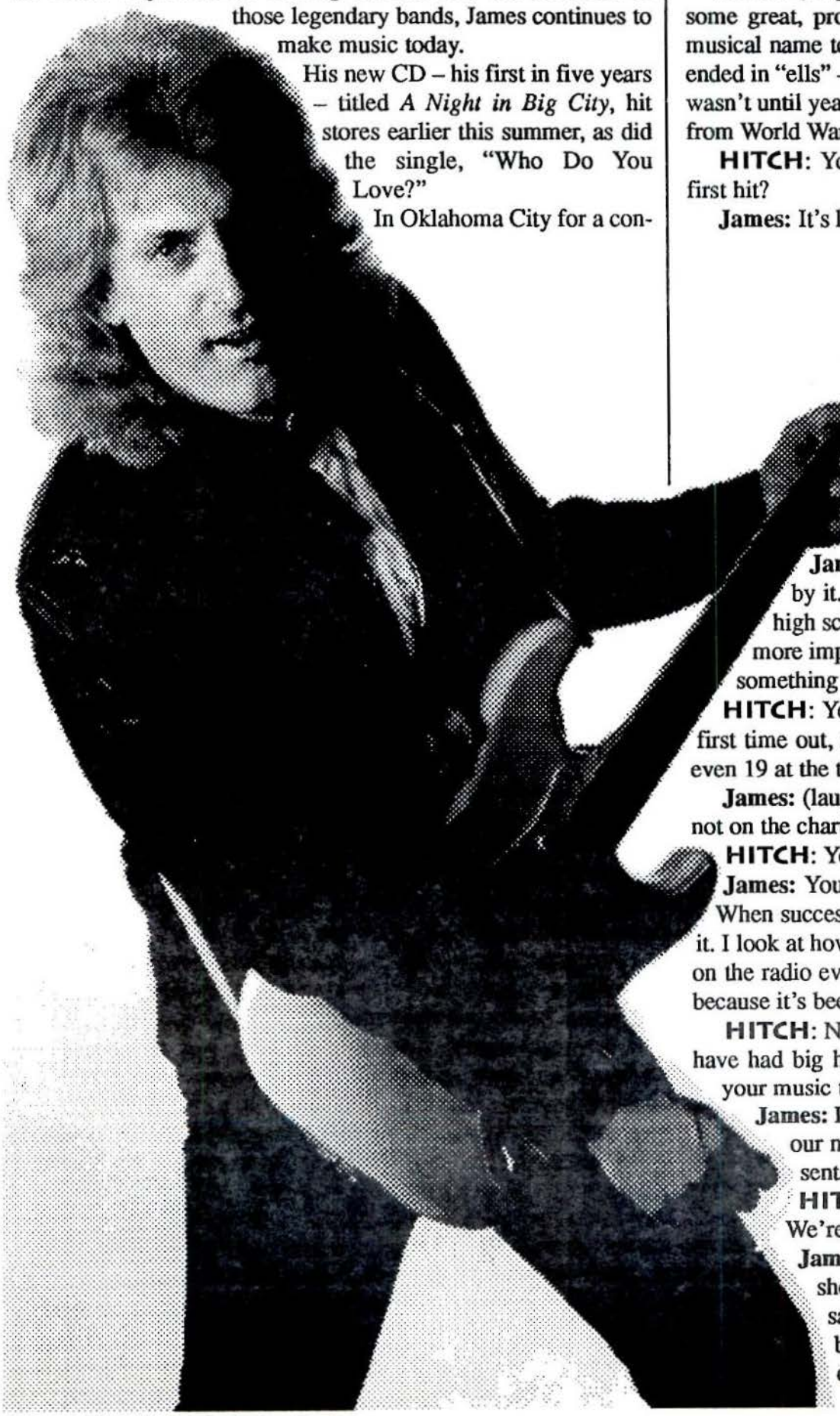
Crystal Blue Conversation

By Rod Lott

One of pop music's great unsung heroes, Tommy James, with his band the Shondells, recorded an impressive and nearly seamless string of hit singles in the late '60s that bulleted toward the top of the charts, often landing alongside such acts as the Beatles, the Beach Boys and the Rolling Stones. Like the members of those legendary bands, James continues to make music today.

His new CD – his first in five years – titled *A Night in Big City*, hit stores earlier this summer, as did the single, "Who Do You Love?"

In Oklahoma City for a concert, James, now 48, granted **HITCH** an interview. He seemed genuinely thankful of my appreciation and knowledge of his music, especially when I mentioned that I was a mere two months old when "Draggin' the Line," his 1971 comeback, hit its peak.



HITCH: What in the heck is a Shondell, anyway?

James: (laughs) I get asked that once a week, and I wish I had some great, profound answer, but it just sounded like a good, musical name to me. In high school, in seemed like every group ended in "ells" – the Hondells, the Schmondells, the Shondells. It wasn't until years later that I learned it was an airplane maneuver from World War II.

HITCH: You were, what, 19 years old when you had your first hit?

James: It's like a Cinderella story, but I first recorded "Hanky Panky" when I was 15, just as a fluke, as a favor, and it was a hit in about four square blocks. I graduated high school in 1965, and somehow a DJ in Pittsburgh got a hold of one record, put it on the air and the switchboard lit up. Then someone bootlegged 80,000 copies and it jumped on the charts.

HITCH: Wasn't it scary to have success like that come so early in life?

James: Oh, it was wild, and I was totally blindsided by it. But that's what I wanted; that's why everyone in high school had a band. When I look back on it today, the more impossible it seems. The Man Upstairs definitely had something to do with it.

HITCH: Yeah, but take for instance, Tiffany, who hit #1 her first time out, redoing one of your songs. I don't think she was even 19 at the time, and look at her now. She's nothing.

James: (laughs) Well, I wouldn't say she's nothing. She's just not on the charts.

HITCH: You're lucky to have escaped that.

James: You bet. You really are a spectator when it happens. When success is handed to you overnight, you aren't ready for it. I look at how fortunate I've been, 30 years in the business and on the radio every day, and I have to thank the good Lord for it, because it's been astounding.

HITCH: Not only are you on the radio daily, but other artists have had big hits doing covers of your songs. What is it about your music that lends itself to remakes?

James: I'm not sure, but I think that good energy surrounds our music. There's like an aura about it; it kinda represents the good times, basically.

HITCH: What did you think of Tiffany's "I Think We're Alone Now"?

James: She did fine. You know, it's amazing because she had that and Billy Idol redid "Mony Mony" at the same time, and they were back-to-back #1 hits. But both Tiffany and Billy kept the songs uptempo and danceable. What throws me are the covers that take

a lot of liberties.

HITCH: What about Joan Jett's "Crimson and Clover"?

James: She kept it rockin'. That's the way we would've recorded it, if we had done it in the '80s instead of the '60s.

HITCH: What about John Wesley Harding's "Crystal Blue Persuasion"?

James: You know, I've never heard that, and a lot of people have told me how fantastic it is. Apparently he had a big hit up in Canada with it, but I've never heard it.

HITCH: What does "Mony Mony" mean, anyway?

James: True story: I had the track done before I had a title. I wanted something catchy like "Sloopy" or "Bony Maroney," but everything sounded so stupid. So Ritchie Cordell and I were writing it in New York City, and we were about to throw in the towel when I went out onto the terrace, looked up and saw the Mutual of New York building (which has its initials illuminated in red at its top). I said, "That's gotta be it. Ritchie, come here, you've gotta see this." It's almost as if God Himself had said, *"Here's the title."* I've always thought that if I had looked the other way, it might have been called "Hotel Taft."

HITCH: So what does the phrase "Crystal Blue Persuasion" mean?

James: I took the title from the Book of Revelations in the Bible, reading about the New Jerusalem. The words jumped out at me, and they're not together; they're spread out over three or four verses. But it seemed to go together, it's my favorite of all my songs and one of our most requested.

HITCH: Have the success of all the remakes kept you well-fed in the last decade?

James: (laughs) I'm real happy that the catalog's stayed active, but my dream has always been to start my own record company, so I did. It's called Aura Records, and the first thing I put out was a double CD called *Discography* of my '74-'92 hits and big album cuts. Now with the new album, I've never had this kind of creative freedom. I'm having more fun now than I ever have. When I'm doing concerts, I'm happy to see that we've acquired another generation to keep my music going.

HITCH: What does the new album sound like?

James: It has an *Alice in Wonderland* quality to it. We called it an "audio movie"; it's like a soundtrack without a film. There are 10 brand-new songs, with dialogue and sound effects in between. It's like a cartoon version of New York City and our night out on the town. It was a lot of fun to do and, frankly, I haven't enjoyed myself this much in a long time. We're very high on this album.

HITCH: Personally, I think "Crimson and Clover" – as well as "Sweet Cherry Wine" – is your finest hour. I mean, the first line – *"Now I don't hardly know her / But I think I could love her"* – you don't know how many times I've actually thought that.

Your editor draggin' the line with Tommy.

James: Perhaps the most gratifying thing about what I do is becoming a part of people's lives. Your fans become part of your extended family. That's the payoff to me.

HITCH: With that song, it seems like you took a turn from your clean-cut popster image to a more earthy, psychedelic route. Was that intentional?

James: That song was very strategic for my career; it was the first time I wrote and produced on my own. If we had bombed with that, I would've never lived it down. I felt it was a song I had to make, and there was a whole magical feeling surrounding the making of it.

HITCH: So if you produced it, the broken vocals at the end were your idea?

James: It was pretty simple to do, but back then, if you wanted to make sound wiggle, you were pretty much on your own.

HITCH: What do you listen to today?

James: Sheryl Crow's album was great. I like R.E.M. and I thought INXS had some groundbreaking singles back in the late '80s. I think Hootie and the Blowfish are the most refreshing breath of air we've had in a long time. But I take each record one at a time, because, and I hate to say this, there's a lot of crap out there.

HITCH: Do you ever get tired of your own stuff? Are you ever driving around and "Mony Mony" comes on the radio and you think "Oh, God, no, not *again*," and turn the dial?

James: Sometimes I feel that way when they're on the radio, but when you do it live with 1,000 people in front of you, suddenly it's *now*, and there's a timelessness about it.

HITCH: Are today's Shondells the original ones?

James: No. We play 40-50 dates a year, and this is the band I've had with me approximately the last 10 years. When it comes to Shondells, I've had so many it's sort of like *Spinal Tap*. There have been like four or five different groups of them.

HITCH: Do you expect to chart again with the new album?

James: Little by little, we're chipping away at it. I really believe this is the finest thing I've done since my last gold record. And I love the single.

HITCH: Have you shot a video for it?

James: We will in about four to six weeks.

HITCH: Have you ever done one before?

James: We shot one for "Mony Mony," but back then, no one would play them. It's pretty archaic by today's standards, with the love beads and everything, but every now and then, MTV shows it.

HITCH: That goes back to my "Crimson and Clover" question. You suddenly went from wearing V-necks to having long hair and bell-bottoms. What's that all about?

James: Too many road gigs. Those are the before-and-after pictures.

HITCH: But your hair today is long.

James: Well, I've learned to eat my vegetables and get eight hours' sleep every night. I'm a new man.

HITCH: I guess that's all my questions then. Thanks for your time.

James: You're welcome. Thank you....And my favorite color is blue. **H**

Bruce Lee and Kung-Fu Mania
(1993)
Goodtimes Home Video
★★★★★

The only thing bad about *Bruce Lee and Kung-Fu Mania* is that two Jehovah's Witnesses came to my door 15 minutes into it, interrupting me. Probably the fastest-paced and finest compilation tape yet to come from Sandy Oliveri's Film Shows (see *Action Heroes of Movies and T.V.*, HITCH 6), *Kung-Fu Mania* is 90 minutes of total martial-arts madness. While I've never been a fan of this film genre at all, every serious movie collector must have at least one example of its kind in his collection, and this tape is it.

Videos reviewed in **HITCH** receive star ratings based not on artistic merit, but on levels of enjoyment, from ★☆☆☆☆ (as much fun as a funeral) to ★★★★★ (fun, fun, fun 'til daddy takes the TV away).

Beginning with a shot of Bruce Lee bursting out of his grave, the *Mania* kicks off with a montage of at least 400 blows, all set to the hip-shakin' tune of one-hit wonder Carl Douglas' "Kung Fu Fighting." The first segment of the tape is devoted to Lee, from his early days as a child actor and as *The Green Hornet*'s sidekick to his superstar years in such films as *The Chinese Connection*. Presented in full is a featurette detailing the making of *Enter the Dragon*, while most impressive is a lengthy clip from *Fists of Fury*, in which Lee successfully defends himself against a whole room of enemies. Carefully choreographed, this sequence is exciting, and even remains fresh given all the tired retreads that Lee's success spawned.

And it's those tired retreads that comprise the rest of *Kung-Fu Mania*, in the form of preview after preview, a good chunk of them coming from either Raymond Chow or the Shaw Brothers, and all of them featuring gravity-defying Orientals, wall-to-wall waka-waka disco music and even some slow-motion plate smashin' thrown in for good measure. One of the first is the notoriously bad-taste quickie *Bruce Lee Fights Back from the Grave*. Two other films represented here also aim to wring every last cent they can off the Lee legend: *Bruce Lee: The Man, The Myth* stars Bruce Li, "a master in three forms of Wang Chung, taking on *all* colors," while *Bruce Lee...His Last Days* tells the "true" story of "the rascal, the hero, the lover," including the time he was attacked by a man with a pogo stick.

Other clips of note:

• *The Black Dragon*, featuring an African-American star. "Big muthas are his specialty," says the announcer. Co-stars "the Latin terror, Jorge Esdraga."

• "Skull-bustin' action" is what's guaranteed from *Shadow of the Dragon*, who "comes on strong, like King Kong."

• Lady Whirlwind, "mistress of the death blow," stars in *Deep Thrust*.

• Nature's most deadly assassins – the centipede, snake, scorpion, lizard and *toad* – make up *The 5 Deadly Venoms*.

• *Spearman* features some awfully impressive flag-corps moves, plus a near death-by-abacus.

• *5 Masters of Death* promises to teach its audience "five new kung-fu killing techniques."

• "See the all-powerful White Hermit" in *The Executioners of Death*!

• Chuck Norris is a ruthless crime boss ("Who dares refuse him?") about to get his in *Slaughter in San Francisco*.

• Angela Mao, "the China doll with deadly kicks" stars in *When Tae Kwon Doe Strikes*, a truly telling title. Aside: "Those who use it take command. Those who don't...*die!*"

• Don't miss the head-chopping theatrics of *The Flying Guillotine*.

• "Four cripples on a mission of revenge!" is the plot of *The Four Invincibles*, in which a mute and a one-armed man team up with two other physically challenged fighters to form a Gumpian freedom force of sorts.

My favorite clip was the one for the improbably titled *'Kung Fu' Master Bruce Lee Style*. From its preview's subtitles, you can bet an American PR agency didn't have a hand in its production: "Most Amusement and Exciting...Big Star Chan Shin...See the Kung Fu...Don't Miss Chance!"

Other flicks featured include *Duel of the Iron Fist, Lightning Swords of Death, 10 Tigers of Kwangtang, Kung Fu Conspiracy, Street Gangs of Hong Kong, The Tattooed Dragon, Killer from Shantung* and *Shaolin Challenges Ninja*. You really owe it to yourself to see this. Best of all, you can get it for about eight bucks.

Beaks: The Movie
(1987)
International Video Entertainment
★★★☆☆

Alfred Hitchcock's classic *The Birds* displayed his usual blend of wit, suspense, horror and masterful filmmaking

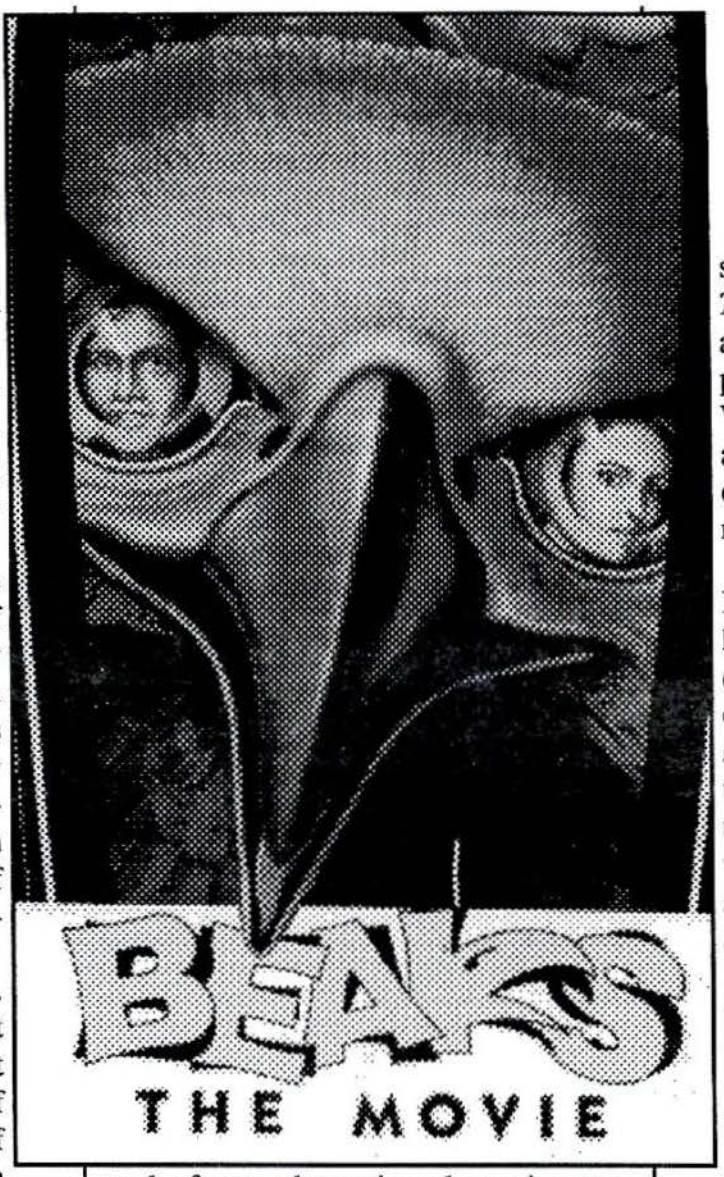
in a story of a small town under avarian attack. Rene Cardona Jr.'s *Beaks* just has the birds.

Pouty Michelle Johnson (*Blame It on Rio*) tries unsuccessfully to convince us she is a professional broadcast journalist, hot on the trail of a story in which a farmer in Spain was mauled by his own coop of chickens.

Blue Lagoon refugee Christopher Atkins plays her cameraman boyfriend, although he looks to be about 12 years old still and has conversations with his penis.

Soon, the newshound couple stumble upon an entire country of people who are unwittingly the prey of God's feathered friends. From canaries to pigeons, they're killers one and all. A man on his balcony gets his eye pecked out, while a husband and wife get pecked to death in their own kitchen. In a direct ripoff of Hitchcock, the birds even terrorize a child's birthday party.

Cardona is one sorry director. You can almost see the innocent creatures being thrown at the cast members. The opening minutes of the film are devoted to a montage of an old man blowing away birds with a single bullet. Unlike Hitchcock's sinister, up-in-the-air ending, Cardona has his flock just quit bothering everybody abruptly, and for no reason at all. The final moment shows that the world will next be subjected to unrelenting terror via – no kidding – pond flies. Laughs a-plenty, despite deadman's pacing.



Slaughter
(1976)
N/A
★★★☆☆

Not to be confused with the blaxploitation flick of the same name, this *Slaughter* is a dirt-cheap killer-dog movie so quickly forgotten that it's not even listed in the video guides.

David McCallum stars as a bushy-haired and bearded man from the local university who begins to investigate a strange series of murders in which the victims are missing big chunks of their flesh.

Coyotes are suspected, but soon the real culprit shows its teeth: a collective pack of every domesticated mutt in town. They've turned against their owners, and they're pissed.

So ferocious are these canines that they even drag an old woman across her yard, probably because she's wearing bell-bottoms. Even poor Linda Gray, miles away from *Dallas*, gets offed while she's *really* starting to enjoy her shower. Ironically, the guy you really want to see face the wrath of the pups is the fat college student who raids the kitchen late one night and starts to improvise an ode to sweetrolls, but he escapes.

Some of the shots of the townsfolk kicking and shooting dogs look all too real to be faked; McCallum even blows one German shepherd all the way across the room.

As with *Beaks*, the dogs attack for no explainable reason, and stop doing so as well. The final image suggests their malevolent power has transferred to the feline world. Slightly more enjoyable than *Beaks*, *Slaughter* proves that animal-attack flicks are always more fun if you do it doggie-style.

It! The Terror from Beyond Space
(1958)
MGM/UA Home Video
★★★★☆

One of the best of the innumerable space-monster entries of the '50s, *It! The Terror from Beyond Space* is also one of the best, even despite – or perhaps because of – its sparseness. With most of the action confined to about three small sets, *It* was obviously streamlined, as its 68-minute running time will attest.

As *It* begins, an astronaut on a Mars mission is the lone survivor of his crew, claiming they were all murdered by an alien being. A crew rockets to the red planet to retrieve him so justice can be swift. Luckily for the astronaut, the rocket is unwittingly host to a growling stowaway who can prove the man's innocence, as well as kill off some of his fellow spacesters one by one.

If any of this sounds familiar, there's good reason; *It* is part of the unofficial basis for Ridley Scott's classic *Alien*. While that landmark film did wonders for its genre in full color and with the benefit of modern effects, the black-and-white *It* comes close to equaling those shocks, even if its creature is clearly a guy in a suit with floppy arms. Never underestimate the audience's fear of being trapped in enclosed places with a stranger, and you'll realize why.

Even though all of the men talk more like welders than astronauts, and even though the women serve coffee as well as perform autopsies, *It* stands up well, one of the most effective and most fun cheapies ever made.

Bigfoot: The Unforgettable Encounter
(1994)
Republic Pictures Home Video
★★★★★

Every once in a while, I run across a flick whose premise strikes me as so utterly ludicrous, I can't stop laughing for days. Presenting itself as a heartwarming family film about the bonds of friendship and loyalty, I have to wonder if anybody involved with this actually thought it

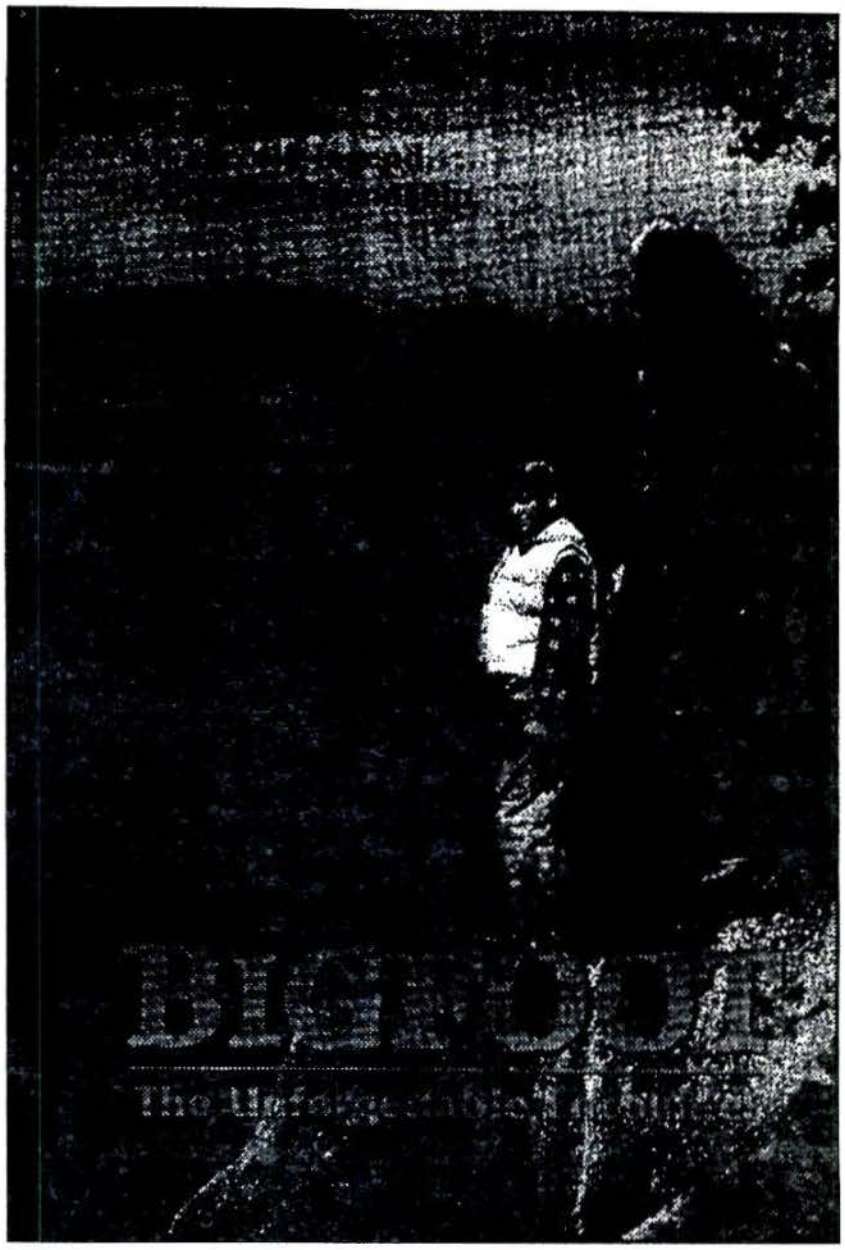
would be taken seriously. Thankfully, they did – and that's where the real fun comes in.

Bigfoot: The Unforgettable Encounter – and "unforgettable" is just one way of putting it – starts out in the grand tradition of '70s animal-attack movies, with a drunken redneck being attacked in the woods as he urinates. The next morning, a photographer takes some pictures of what appears to be a Bigfoot monster (who looks like someone took the monster's face from *Young Frankenstein* and slapped it on a gorilla suit), and soon the authorities are pinning the attack on Bigfoot. (It's later revealed to be a grizzly, but I guess they had to get the plot rolling somehow.)

The publicity draws in wealthy business man Chas Frederick (played by David Rasche, one of those typecast bad guys whom we all know we've seen somewhere before, but just can't place him) who wants to capture the creature and put him on display. Also interested in Bigfoot – nonsexually, sadly – is Crystal Chappell, an ultra-hot twentysomething who's supposed to be the Dean of Anthropology at Northwestern University in Chicago. Yeah, right.

Meanwhile, Cody, the token annoying 11-year-old kid (played by Zachery Ty Bryan of TV's *Home Improvement*), gets lost in the forest and steps right into a bear trap, which to see him do has long been a dream of mine. He is about to eaten by a grizzly – something I had been praying for – when Bigfoot arrives on the scene to do some serious butt-kickin'. Cody thanks him and nervously attempts to break the ice. "So, you're Bigfoot?" he asks. "Oh, man, you reek! But you did save my life. Kicked the bear's butt. That was pretty cool."

Bigfoot is overwhelmed by the kid's eloquence, and soon Cody has taught him how to shake hands, wear sunglasses and give him piggyback rides.



IT'S ALL ON CABLE!

Equally as exciting as HBO's *Sports Illustrated* swimsuit specials (read: boring) is Showtime's 1994 presentation of *Victoria's Secret: Dreams and Fantasies*, a purported exclusive, behind-the-scenes look at the making of the ever-popular lingerie and swimwear catalog that *Spin* magazine once declared (when they wrote stuff of their own) as "better than a *Playboy*."

A solid hour of MTV-style posing and chit-chat, this special isn't without its ultra-secret revelations: *Heather smokes! Naomi dances like a nerd! Some of the hair-and-makeup guys are gay!*

Someone cracks a joke at the expense of the mightily scary Jackie Stallone, while the sight of the bald and beer-bellied fashion-person calling his male assistants "honey" while wearing a tight black Speedo was enough to make me barf.

Best of all is prima donna Stephanie Seymour, throwing a tantrum because the film crew is distracting to her, instructing them to "get what they need...then get out." Her excuse to her photographer is, "If they're filming the whole time I'm working, it really makes me nervous."

Two things, Steph: 1) What you're doing is most assuredly *not* work, and 2) With the money they're throwing at you, you really don't have a say in the whole thing. If I were pulling in a couple million a year, I think that'd be enough to erase any nervousness I might have.

If you don't think Stephanie's a bitch after seeing her gripe and moan here, you'll probably have to live with her to find out for sure.

Warning: A pre-program notice says the film contains "brief nudity," but I didn't see any. And, believe me, I checked.

Unfortunately, this being a family film, we do not get to see Bigfoot teaching Cody the ways of the woods, like peeing in the stream and raping bears.

Then, things really start to happen fast: Bigfoot is captured by Dean Chappel's research team, only to be freed by Cody, who loves his big friend dearly and can't stand the thought of him locked up in that old cage. Chappell continues her search, and as she's about to slip off a cliff to certain death, Bigfoot happens along and rescues her. To show her gratitude, she plugs him in the back twice with a tranquilizer gun. (Isn't that just like a woman?)

Realizing the error of her ways, she agrees to have the creature taken to a wildlife preserve where he'll be protected by the government, but Frederick and his men set out to hijack the truck that's transporting Bigfoot to safety. To complicate matters even worse, a local TV crew broadcasts the entire chase sequence live, while a bunch of good ol' boys huddle around the tube at their favorite bar, cheering the whole thing on as if it were Game 7 of the World Series.

Of course, everything comes out okay, and the film ends with Cody and his big buddy exchanging a teary good-bye. And I must admit, I was crying, too...from laughing so dang hard! The whole thing's like *Free Willy*, but only if Willy were a landfaring creature with hair, and if it completely bypassed theaters so it couldn't earn of lick of dough.

You know, this film gives me real hope for the future of bad movies. I just pray that there's a sequel...and that maybe Cody could get killed in it. That would be a nice touch. —*CH*

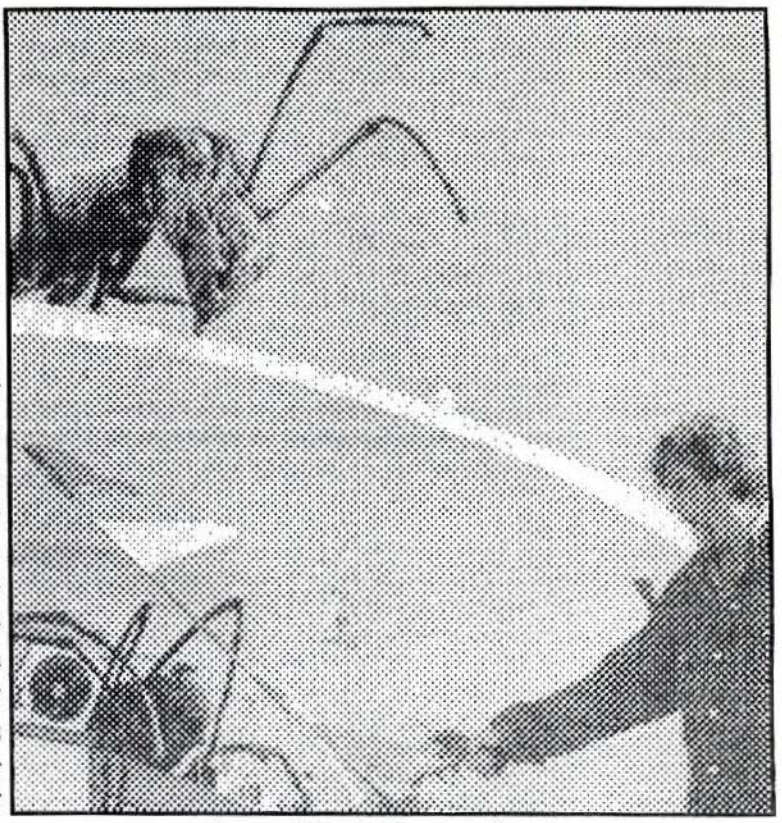
The Incredible Voyage of Stingray
(1980)
Family Home Entertainment
★★★★☆

Basically just Gerry Anderson's *Thunderbirds* underwater, *Stingray* is not as unsettling, even though the marionette characters walk like they're saddle-sore.

Capt. Troy Tempest of W.A.S.P. – not the hair-metal band, but rather the World Aquanaut Security Patrol – fights over a mute slave girl named Marina with the evil Titan and his gilled henchmen who speak a waterlogged dialect of Japanese. Titan's right-hand man, who talks like Peter Lorre, almost dupes the W.A.S.P. team when he cons his way into their HQ by pretending to be an expert on "teaching dumb people how to speak." Troy, thinking only with his Pinocchio, falls for it.

In fact, Troy commits so many breaches of security that if this were real life, he'd be fired and pounding the pavement looking for civilian work. This contains about three different climaxes, one involves whether or not a fish will stare at Troy for a solid minute. Troy is difficult to look at for elongated periods of time, because his big-lipped doofus gaze reminds one of the guy who played Jethro in *The Beverly Hillbillies* movie.

Only occasionally sexist, this is probably the best kiddie movie ever made in an aquarium. It ends with a Troy-loves-Marina montage that would make Perry Como proud.



***Ants*: It ain't no picnic.**

Empire of the Ants
(1977)
Goodtimes Home Video
★★★☆☆

What begins as your average insect-onslaught-via-rear-projection picture takes an abrupt wrong turn at its midpoint, focusing on a sugar-refinery conspiracy so outlandish that it would fit well into any Oliver Stone work.

Bert I. Gordon, the man behind such black-and-white big-thing '50s classics as *The Amazing Colossal Man* and *Earth vs. the Spider*, apparently didn't realize it was 1977 when he directed this, his final sci-fi movie. Ants on a tropical island soon to be turned into a paradise resort grow as big as humans when leaking vats of radioactive waste wash up on shore. Bitchy Joan Collins, eager to unload the land to a tour group, fails to tell her would-be buyers about the new island inhabitants while talking up the future tennis courts.

No matter. The guests' picnic is soon spoiled as Joan's field of potential clients narrows when the ants finally move in for the kill. For the long shots, Gordon uses his time-honored method of rear projection; for the close-ups, Gordon thrusts hairy ant heads at his victimized actors. Neither are convincing enough for anyone to care.

Seeing Joan devoured by the queen ant, though, is something to tune in for. At several points, Gordon lets us experience what it's like to see through an ant's eyes when he puts a cheese grater in front of the camera.

Swamp Thing
(1982)
Columbia/Tri-Star Home Video
★★☆☆☆

The Return of Swamp Thing
(1989)
Columbia/Tri-Star Home Video
★★★★★

In this DC Comics adaptation, Wes Craven trips up big-time. Here, he's in his schlocky *People Under the Stairs* mode, instead of his *Nightmare on Elm Street* style. A lot of the scenes are so dark, you can't see what's going on. But then again, there doesn't seem to be a whole helluva lot happening, anyway.

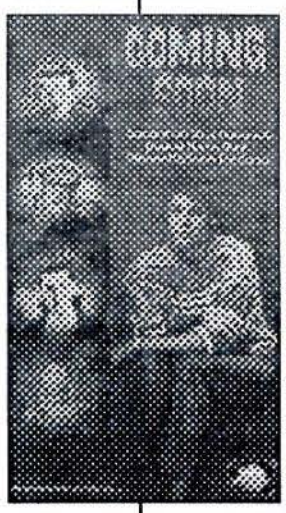
In a plot never fully explained, Ray Wise (*Twin Peaks*' Leland) is a scientist who discovers some kind of explosive formula that makes plant life grow from

its drops. Adrienne Barbeau is on hand for some reason. Evil Louis Jordan, however, has Wise offed once the formula proves to be a success. Wise somehow becomes the Swamp Thing.

From then on, it's a lot of mindless chatter and a few chases through the bayou. Swamp Thing gets his arm cut off, but it grows back thanks to the sun. A fat, bald guy turns into a midget dogboy. In the wackiest scene, Jordan becomes a hairy lizard-like creature wielding a sword.

None of it makes much sense, thanks in part to a sluggish pace. Things never really start to roll, and it's way too serious for it's own good.

On the other hand, Jim Wynorski's sequel doesn't take itself the slightest bit seriously, and thus succeeds. I don't know who ever told Heather Locklear she could act, but she's here anyway as the stepdaughter of Jordan, he miraculously resurrected from his death in the original. She's out to uncover the truth surrounding her mother's death; he's out to use her in his experiments to reverse the aging process.



Meanwhile, Swamp Thing's still kicking ass, including those of an asthmatic egghead monster and a walking leech creature. Swampie's even got a theme song now (Creedence Clearwater's "Down on the Bayou"), and Dick Durock dons moss again to play the hero to charming effect.

The scenes in which an enterprising black youth and his fat redheaded friend attempt a grasp at fame and fortune by snapping pics of Swamp Thing are hilarious. These two kids deserve a sequel all their own. Twinkie jokes are cracked at the expense of the chubby boy, Locklear makes a jab at her old *T.J. Hooker* gig and the scar comparison-cum-seduction scene that was much lauded in 1992's *Lethal Weapon 3* actually was swiped from this film.

With lots of humor, rubber monsters, quick pacing and a better-than-usual job by Wynorski, the colorful *The Return of Swamp Thing* has more of a comic-book feel, thus a vast improvement over Craven's heavy-handed and overrated original.

Coming Soon
(1982)
MCA/Universal Home Video
★★★☆☆

Essentially a one-hour commercial for Universal Pictures, *Coming Soon* is a compilation tape of trailers and clips from Universal vault of horror and science-fiction movies. Directed by John Landis, the tape is hosted by "Miss" Jamie Lee Curtis, whose '70s-style hairdo is the scariest thing here.

All the classic monsters – Dracula, Frankenstein, the Wolfman – are represented, but thankfully, Landis doesn't ignore the lesser-known (if known at all) films such as *Curucu: Beast of the Amazon*, *King Kong vs. Godzilla*, *The Invisible Agent* and *Monster on the Campus*. Especially of note are Alfred Hitchcock's clever trailers to *The Birds* and *Psycho*, which are much more effective than simply stringing together scenes from the films, as is the practice today.

If you can get past the monotony of the Drac 'n' Frank stuff – long before trailers were an art form – you'll find segments devoted to The Mummy, screams, The Creature from the Black Lagoon, explosions, Abbott & Costello's monster meets and even atomic-themed pictures, including *Tarantula*, *The Mole People* and *This Island Earth* ("2 1/2 Years in the Making!").

Completely needless and out-of-place is the extended chat with Steven Spielberg regarding some film of his called *E.T.* Don't give up, though, or you'll miss a typical Landis post-credit gag.

Psycho Cop Returns
(1994)
Columbia/Tri-Star Home Video
★★★★★

Here's one of those rare occurrences: a sequel that surpasses the original. This is due largely to the filmmakers' decision to play this outing for laughs. They give them, and we get them.

The plot is merely an excuse to get things rolling right away: Four guys decide to hold an after-hours bachelor party in their office. A crazed police officer comes to kill them for no reason. That's it; nothing more, nothing less.

Of the four horny office slaves, Miles David Dougal is the standout, as a neurotic, nervous, twitching timebomb of a man. The quartet guzzle liquor, watch a stag film starring "Spongehead" and make out with three strippers, including Julie Strain, whose skin-mag credentials are actually spelled out in the opening credits. Bobby Ray Shafer, reprising his role, is the cop who cracks wise as he cracks skulls.

You want subplots? There's one about a gorgeous blonde who's working late, and another about a couple wanting to copulate in the copy room without getting caught.

Psycho Cop Returns is, surprisingly, very funny, especially in its opening sequences. It's directed with nonsensical style by Adam Rifkin under his "Rif Coogan" pseudonym (instead of being "a Rif Coogan film," the credits mark the movie as "another Rif Coogan adventure). I don't know he chose not to use his real name, because this eightysomething-minute wonder is deserving of cult status is nothing to be ashamed of, and 10 times more entertaining than Rifkin's major-studio bomb *The Chase*.

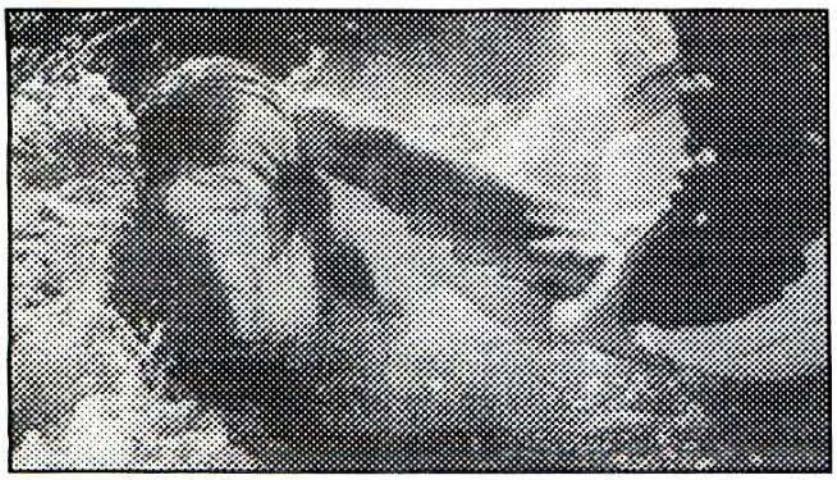
I am counting the days 'til *Psycho Cop Forever*.

The Stranger Within
(1974)
LIVE Home Video
★★☆☆☆

In this made-for-TV pap of sheer gynecological horror, Barbara Eden stars as a housewife who gets pregnant, even though her husband's had a vasectomy. Yessiree, Ms. Eden has been knocked up by an alien being. Think of it as *I Dream of Rosemary's Baby*.

Before she knows whose child she's about to spawn, Babs starts to act *real weird*, like speed-reading physics books and using lots of salt on her food. She even kicks the sheets off her bed and drinks a lot of coffee! Ooh, scary!

By the time she starts speaking in tongues, you'll be so ready for it to end that you'll want to join along.



Getting suckered in, in *Tentacles*.

Tentacles
(1977)
Vestron Video
★★★☆☆

Jaws is considered a classic because Spielberg made every effort to convince you the shark was real. In this Italian ripoff documenting the terror unleashed on a beach by a giant octopus, no such effort is taken. Instead, you get close-ups of an octopus in a tank and silouhettes. The film is cost-effective even further by having the beast squirt black ink at its victims so they don't have to spend money to show you any carnage.

John Huston stars as a reporter investigating the eight-legged monster's first victims, including a baby. Calling the creature "monstrous and infernal," Huston does nothing to solve the crimes and disappears from the last third of the movie, but he does earn points by telling his sister (Shelley Winters) that she ate too much candy as a child. Henry Fonda has about six lines, while Claude Akins' role as a sheriff (the third film of his in a row in which he has occupied this part) is a bit meatier.

The octopus attacks a sailboat race and even sneaks up on a really fat guy. The octopus also *growls*. He is finally brought to his death by two Shamus, who ram him continuously until he turns to chum.

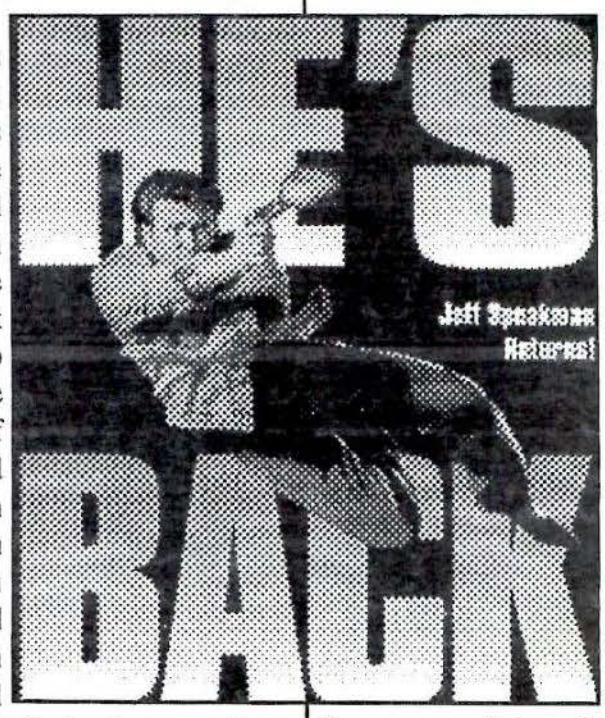
The Expert
(1995)
Orion Home Video
★☆☆☆☆

"HE'S BACK!" Do you care? When the "he" in question is none other than *Street Knight* Jeff Speakman, the answer is a resounding "no."

Basically no more than your run-of-the-mill redneck martial-arts video action star, Speakman plays John Lomax, a "special operations expert."

Some guy named Michael Shaner is the bad guy, who tries to charm his way into Lomax's sister's home by acting Gumpy. When he forces his way in, she tries to fend him off with a cheese grater, but to no avail. He kills her after saying, "Life is good. Love is better. I love you." A simple "good night" would have sufficed.

Shaner's brought up on trial, but a psychiatrist for the prison claims he can be rehabilitated successfully outside cell walls. That, as the announcer says, "is when Lomax says, 'To *hell* with justice!'"



To hell with this dumb movie, I say. Speakman has as much range as the iron bars featured so prominently in this film. When he decides to break into the prison to take revenge, he turns to the help of an old pal. (And you know you're in trouble when you are told the film boasts "a special appearance by Jim Varney.") Yep, all greasy and ponytailed, the part-time Ernest turns in a cameo as a Q to Speakman's Bond, recommending tranquilizer darts to get the job done. He also tries to sell Speakman an Oriental wife, and tells him to "splatter the sonofabitch for me!" I guess Lance Henriksen was unavailable.

Former Miss America Elizabeth Gracen is Speakman's love interest. Unlike her former leading men, however, Speakman fails to get her naked. Perhaps that is because, as his last name suggests, he is a man of only so many talents, sex not among them. James Brolin plays the slimy prison warden and says, "I don't like to take a look at my dark side, but I will if I have to." We never know if he does, since Brolin is incapable of more than one emotion.

To settle any confusion, no, this is not a prequel to the John Travolta bomb *The Experts*, but both flicks share a common bond: total stupidity.

Hard Ticket to Hawaii
(1987)
Warner Home Video
★★★★☆
Fit to Kill
(1993)
Columbia/Tri-Star Home Video
★★★★☆

As these two films demonstrate, Andy Sidaris hasn't changed his formula all that much over the years. God bless him for it, and damned if we don't eat it up every time.

Boasting horrendous synthesizer music, *Hard Ticket to Hawaii* has agents Donna (Dona Spier) and Rowdy (Ronn Moss) out to tackle a Hawaiian drug lord. Donna and equally blonde sidekick Hope Marie Carlton do their best detective work in the Jacuzzi. Complicating matters is an incredible subplot about a live snake who is contaminated with toxins from cancer-infested rats. The little bastard slithers his way all over the island before bursting out of the toilet to have a final showdown with Donna. Rowdy saves the day by blowing it up with a rocket gun and remarking, "Just when you thought it was safe to take a pee."

There's also a woman who happens to be a man, as well as a skateboarder packing both heat and an inflatable doll. Luckily, Andy's upped the Playmate ante in recent years, as *Fit to Kill* attests. The likes of Moss have been thankfully gutted to make room for more women, and believe me, more room is needed.

In this outing, Donna and Nicole (Roberta Vasquez) are out for revenge against the same greasy slimeball who tormented them in 1992's *Hard Hunted* (see **HITCH** 6). Julie Strain (who keeps showing up in these flicks as different characters, yet always dies at the end) is a villain who uses an radio-controlled helicopter to kill people. Even though I just saw this, I don't really remember much more about it, except that the ladies take time out at numerous points in the film to show how fit they are, and I believe that every Sidaris movie I've seen has ended with a champagne toast.

The Manitou
(1978)
Columbia/Tri-Star Home Video
★★☆☆☆

Tony Curtis has a problem. His girlfriend (Susan Strasberg) has this strange growth on her back which has powers that cause surgeons to cut themselves, old ladies to levitate and Strasberg herself to spout foreign babble in her sleep. As it turns out, it's not her fault; she's got a freakin' midget Indian in her cupboard!

It's too bad it's only toward the end that this slimy, blank-eyed Indian exits her body and then summons up a lizard mirage and turns a hospital ward into a deep freeze. The end has Curtis and Strasberg battling the little guy in space, complete with asteroids and cheap sound effects.

Written and directed by William Girdler, *The Manitou* is a disappointment after seeing the nearly relentless over-the-top cheesiness of earlier films like *Grizzly* and *Day of the Animals* (see **HITCH** 5). The ending hints that it's not an ending at all, but thankfully, Girdler died right after this was completed, thus preventing us from having to see more scenes of Curtis swilling beer from a wine glass and getting infected with disco fever.

Ghoulies IV
(1994)
Columbia/Tri-Star Home Video
★★★☆☆

As if this series needed to go beyond the first one, director Jim Wynorski picks up the franchise reins and gears it toward total jokiness, which was probably for the best. This series is in so dire need of life support that the Roman numeral in the title could designate not only the fourth entry, but an IV.

Pete Liapis, the guy who starred in the 1985 original, has put his devil-worshipping days behind him and become a cop, although his dominatrix-outfitted ex-girlfriend (Stacie Randall) returns to yank him down to hell with her. Somehow, a red jewel and a hooker sacrifice figure into all this, but it's far too confusing to try and explain here, much less recall. It doesn't matter anyway.

Strangely, this is a non-Ghoulies *Ghoulies* movie. Instead of the herd of little gremlins that plagued the first three films, we get just two dwarf-sized Ghoulies, so the expensive puppets of days past have been tossed in favor of men in rubber suits. Their PC names are "Ghoulie Dark" and "Ghoulie Lite," which is just a nice way of saying "Jive Turkey Ghoulie" and "Redneck Ghoulie."

Thrown in merely to justify the title, they do nothing to forward the plot, with their brief screen time spent jumping into the backs of trucks, subduing a janitor whom they mistake for Pat Morita and warning viewers of the upcoming *Ghoulies IV, Part 2*.

The budget on this one is so low that the Ghoulies' mouths rarely move. On the other hand, Randall's ample cleavage is a marvelous effect to which no expense has been spared.

Getting better at this stuff, Wynorski manages a few genuinely funny moments, bringing this far above the level of 1990's *Ghoulies Go to College*. Linda Lavin fans should note that her *Alice* son Philip McKeon has a don't-blink scene in which he is turned into a demon.

At the very least, with Z-grade horror sequels like this and the *Leprechaun* entries, Hollywood's midgets are getting more work.

The Snow Creature
(1954)
Goodtimes Home Video
★★☆☆☆

The opening narration of this film tells us that the first few days of its research expedition into the Himalayas are dull and uneventful. Not content to leave it at that, director W. Lee Wilder (*Killers from Space*, *Phantom from Space*, brother of Oscar-winner Billy) spends the next half-hour or so proving it. Pointless, mind-numbing segments of mountain climbing are alternated with pointless, mind-numbing segments of Paul Langton sitting around playing with his radio while Leslie Denison insults people between bottles of Scotch.

Can you say "padding?"

When the title character does show up

to abduct a village girl, the lumbering expedition becomes a lumbering hunting party for the fabled Yeti.

The researchers, along with lots of non-English speaking locals, at long last succeed in tracking the not-very-snow-creature-looking snow creature to its lair and capturing it.

Langton and company then take their leisurely time getting back down the mountain, whereupon they place the snow creature in a giant, America-bound freezer.

Once there, he of course escapes, and terrorizes the good people of Los Angeles, until quick-thinking Langton tracks him in the sewer system. There, in a final confrontation, the cops plug the Yeti full of lead, and heartily slap one another on the back for a job well done.

So what's the message here, anyway? That it's okay to rip what must surely be considered an endangered species from its natural habitat, then whisk it halfway around the world, just to be gunned down in a sewer? Somebody get PETA on the phone.

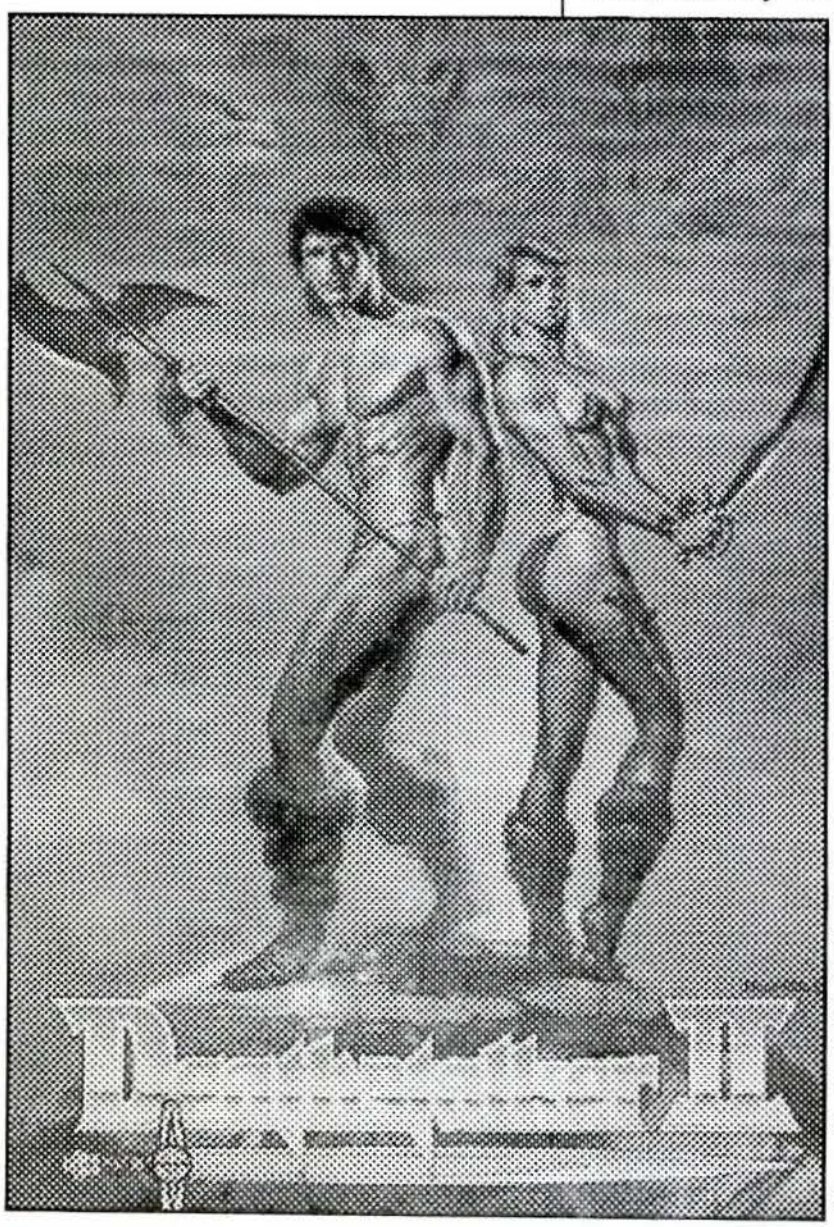
Two stars simply for being edited so poorly that, from time to time, I thought I was watching an Ed Wood film. —*CH*

Deathstalker II: Duel of the Titans
(1987)
Vestron Video
★★★★☆

More like a parody of the nonsensical sword-and-sandal genre than an actual action-packed entry, *Deathstalker II* delivers more than its share of surprises. Directed by Jim Wynorski, the sequel stars the wavy-coiffed and smirking hunk Jon Terelesky as Deathstalker. He happens upon a ragamuffin princess (Monique Gabrielle) who claims to be clairvoyant, and tells him of a mission that will bring him fame and fortune.

She's lying, of course, simply seeking help in destroying her clone, an ultra-sexy and seductive evil villainess (also played to the hilt by Gabrielle). In successfully carrying off two roles of varying character, Gabrielle shows (perhaps for the first time) that she's a whole lot more than just a great pair of breasts, but she goes ahead and shows those off, too.

Along their merry journey, Deathstalker and his gal pal come across zombies, supernatural magicians, musical midgets and several groan-worthy puns. Infusing the non-plot with a healthy sense of fun, Wynorksi does a commendable job, even ending the film with bloopers that are actually funny.



Who Do You Think You're Fooling?
(1993)
Impossible Funky Productions
★★★★★

Stop me if you've heard this one: Despite being praised by critics worldwide for its bold originality, Quentin Tarantino's debut *Reservoir Dogs*, when compared next to Ringo Lam's Hong Kong *City on Fire*, don't look so original no mo'.

Now, if you've got 10 minutes or so, you can judge for yourself, although I must say the evidence is as damning as O.J.'s DNA. Blockbuster Video clerk and film student Mike White has put two and two together and come up with an ingenious, awfully amusing short. C'mon, Quentin, show us your crib sheets.

The tape is available for $5 from the folks at *Cashiers du Cinemart*, P.O. Box 2401, Riverview, MI 48192.

The Nest
(1987)
MGM/UA Home Video
★★★★☆

Scientific experiments with genetic programming go horribly awry and unleash upon an unsuspecting community a new breed of cockroach that's fast, mean and hungry. But don't let the ridiculous premise fool you; this is a low-budget thriller that knows better than to take itself too seriously.

The setting is peaceful North Point, a resort island filled with offbeat, idiosyncratic *Northern Exposure* types who make this film a real rarity – an '80s flick that actually has a few likeable characters.

Robert Lansing (*4D Man*) is Mayor Elias Johnson, who strikes a deal with the mysterious Intec Corporation, which, by promising to invest big bucks in the local economy, is allowed to conduct the aforementioned experiments there. But the pesky little critters develop a major attitude and many, many scenes follow that are not for the squeamish as the roaches cover, and subsequently devour, everything in their path.

There's even a clever plot twist involving the roaches' ability to mutate into whatever they consume.

If you never thought you'd see a really pissed-off hy-brid of a roach and a cat, well...

Throughout the carnage, the film's sense of humor always appears just in time to save it from becoming too tedious. A favorite scene involves the owner of the local diner dealing with her roach problem in some pretty creative ways.

She microwaves them, pours scalding coffee on them, smashes them with her spatula, puts them in the blender, deep fries them – all to the tune of "La Cucharacha."

Later, the local pest control agent, an amusing hippie burnout, mixes up his most potent pesticides as he shouts, "It's party time, roaches! And I'm bringing the cocktails!"

He then drops his cigarette into the chemicals and blows the building sky-high. These and similar touches really brighten up a film that might have otherwise been a dismal patience-tester.

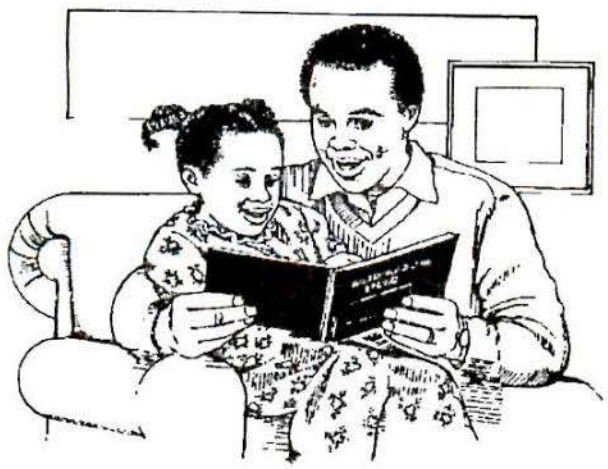
Produced by Julie Corman, wife of His Highness Roger, *The Nest* is that rare flick that manages to overcome its low-budget stature and deliver solid special effects and all-around entertainment value.

I, for one, never thought cockroaches could be this much fun.

—CH

All video reviews in this section were written by Rod Lott, except for those designated with a "CH," which were written by Chris Henry.

Reading Material



ZINES I GOT

The first-ever issue of ***TV Grind*** is one to order today. Chock full of short articles for short attention spans, this digest features an examination of the sexual tension between Fonzie and Mrs. C, as well as some cartoons, charts and a photo of the *Bonanza* cast flipping off the camera. This stuff is funny. Send $2.25 and a couple of stamps to Dean Williams, P.O. Box 14043, Chicago, IL 60614-0043. ✍ John Stone's fifth edition of ***Four Mile Circus*** is his best yet, featuring a brief history of alternative music, a look at cybermags, some anatomy charts and my favorite column, "Too Much Tee-Vee." It's $1.50. John also has a one-shot comic out well worth its $1 price. Based on an Angela Carter short story, ***The Kiss*** is an exotic tale brought to life by John's drawings. Order 'em both, and enclose an extra $2 to get ***Boomgarden*** #5 and the new ***Tales from Freud*** #1 while you're at it. He lives at 1602 S.W. 77th Place, Oklahoma City, OK 73159. ✍ The Melvins are profiled in ***Rage*** #6, which is also full of other music news, comics, reviews, short stories and – warning – poetry. It's $2 to P.O. Box 1289, Lake Worthless, FL 33460. ✍ ***Pechanko*** is a personal zine typewritten (with a line drawing here or there) detailing his life giving puppet shows to kids and watching John Candy movies with his wife. If you're interested in that kind of excitement, send $2 to Iver Torikian, Oiden 2-10-2-103, Tarumi-ku, Kobe 655 Japan. ✍ The Grover-shirted Mark Maynard edits *Crimewave USA*, a zine with a great title. The highlight of the second issue is an interview with mammary-man Russ Meyer, who says of Kate Moss, "Kill the bitch!" John Waters is also profiled. It's $3 from P.O. Box 675283, Marietta, GA 30067-0013. ✍ If anything, the 12th issue of ***Fantasy Pie*** will be forever burned in my memory as the one where its editor, Rick Partridge, recalls the time when, as a teen, he first masturbated using a vacuum cleaner. This story is six pages long, so no detail is spared. I sure hope Whoopi Goldberg and Mike Tyson don't ever read what he has to say about them, either, since Rick's home address is listed. All this for a buck from 479 Sherman St. #3, Canton, MA 02021. ✍ Godzilla fans like me will love ***G-Fan***, a nice-sized semi-pro job filled to the rim with info on the fire-breathing lizard and all his Japanese monster friends. Though it sometimes ventures into too-serious territory, this is a must for fans of the genre. The cover art is always excellent. It's $3.95 or $20 for a sub from Daikaiju Enterprises, Box 3468, Steinbach, Manitoba, Canada, ROA 2A0. ✍ In the wake of the OKC bombing, I'm sick and tired of hearing about militias and how the government is trying to take away our freedoms to the point of where our lives will be in danger. So I wasn't thrilled to receive the ***Survivor Newsletter***, which looks like it was thrown together in the course of 10 minutes. The guy is a big believer in the Church of the SubGenius, too. To think the guy wanted to trade, too. Ha! If you're into that whole crazy conspiratorial B.S., send a buck to Evans, Apt. 2E, 11-15 45th Ave., Lic, NY 11101. ✍ The latest edition of the one-page satirical ***Echolalia*** links Rush Limbaugh to hypogonadism, and has a funny story on the Richard Nixon stamp. Send $15 for a sub or $5 for a complete set of back issues, or I guess just a couple of stamps for a sample copy to 2300-B Central SE, Suite 117, Albuquerque, NM 87106-3506. ✍ Boasting of "ART Poetry Fiction Music," ***The Unit Circle*** had not a shred of anything I was interested in reading. Trust me. While well-designed, just not much here. Send a stamp to P.O. Box 20352, Seattle, WA 98102. ✍ The same can be said for ***The West Virginia Surf Report***, which is a collection of dumb thoughts like, "My first girlfriend liked to caulk my butt crack with cole slaw." I suppose for a stamp, you can witness such rollicking hilarity on your own, from P.O. Box 43662, Atlanta, GA 30336-0662. ✍ Sort of a humor zine involving history, ***A Day Late and a Dollar Short*** is certainly worth a look. I liked the gossip column involving George Washington and Ben Franklin the best. Points to the editor for initiating a no-poetry policy. Just a buck from 677 Kennedy Blvd. #3L, Bayonne, NJ 07002. ✍ Even though it has only two illustrations, Richard Sagall's ***Interesting!*** is a very fun read. No more than a collection of facts, quotes and other tidbits he's run across that tweaked his fancy, this zine is definitely one to get. A whole lot of knowledge at your disposal for just $3 from P.O. Box 1069, Bangor, ME 04402-1069. ✍ The brand-new ***Chum Magazine*** is one of the best-looking zines I've ever seen. The writing's not bad, either, with a Man or Astroman? interview and a look at transvestites in popular culture. Send $2 to P.O. Box 148390, Chicago, IL 60614-8390. ✍ If you're a radical dude into biking and poppin' wheelies, get ***Rantcycle***. If you're not, don't bother. Send $1 to Box 739, Boston, MA 02112. ✍ The premiere issue of the cleverly titled ***Cashiers du Cinemart*** has a lengthy story on Tarantino's ripping off a Hong Kong film in *Reservoir Dogs*, plus digs at Winona Ryder, Ethan Hawke and Sonic Youth. What it lacks in looks it makes up for in attitude. Send a buck to Mike White, P.O. Box 2401, Riverview, MI 48192. ✍ Is Grace a virgin or isn't she? Help her decide after you read her story in her personal zine, ***If Everything Happens That Can't Be Done***, for $2 to P.O. Box 540, Mount Kisco, NY 10549. ✍ There are so many self-published comics out there to the point of overkill, but ***Cork!*** is actually one well worth the read. The second issue has Root and his ol' goateed pal Bolly Watson taking to the road, while Bolly relates his Mexican encounter with a trained tarantula. Issue #3 finds them dining at The Burning Tuber, caught between an angry herd of rampaging cows and camels, and

flying around in a time machine. Well-written and uniquely drawn. Just $1.50 from one Merrell Hammer, 5938 Old Lodge, Houston, TX 77066. ✍ Apparently, two years have passed since the last issue of ***Scram***. After many problems, the third issue is done. Full of lengthy, wordy pieces, it has a few highlights, including an article detailing how malcontents can enjoy Disneyland and a song-by-song examination of Burt Reynolds' lost 1973 album *Ask Me What I Am*. It's $2.50 from P.O. Box 461626, Hollywood, CA 90046-1626. ✍ If you're still not a subscriber to ***Psychotronic Video***, whip Mr. Michael Weldon out a check right this instant. Issue #20 is the best I've seen yet, with interesting profiles of Brion James, June Wilkinson and the director of the *Maniac Cop* series. With the 100+ movies reviewed every issue, you're never at a loss for something to read. Send $22 for a six-issue sub to 3309 Rt. 97, Narrowsburg, NY 12764-6126. ✍ The latest spate of Fred Hamilton's ***Redneck Riveria Update*** has been taking a look at all the movies shown at South Carolina's drive-ins of years past, from Jayne Mansfield nudies to H.G. Lewis splatterfests. He'll send anyone 10 copies for $2, so write to P.O. Box 446, N. Myrtle Beach, SC 29597. ✍ Since Tom Mertins has declared himself no longer a citizen of that oh-so-oppressive United States, Congress should pass laws not allowing the likes of him to use paper to print crap like ***erm***. It's about a dozen pages with a lot of white space, dumb poetry and philosophical rants that no one will read, anyway. A free publication, but an utter piece of crap. ✍ As the next-to-last issue of the comic ***Mr. Jingle***, #2 has an amusing tale of teen-punk-angst, but the highlights are the pair of subversive one-pagers: "Tooty" and "Chippy the Chipmunk." It's $1.50 from Schlong, 163 Buena Vista Dr., DeKalb, IL 60115.

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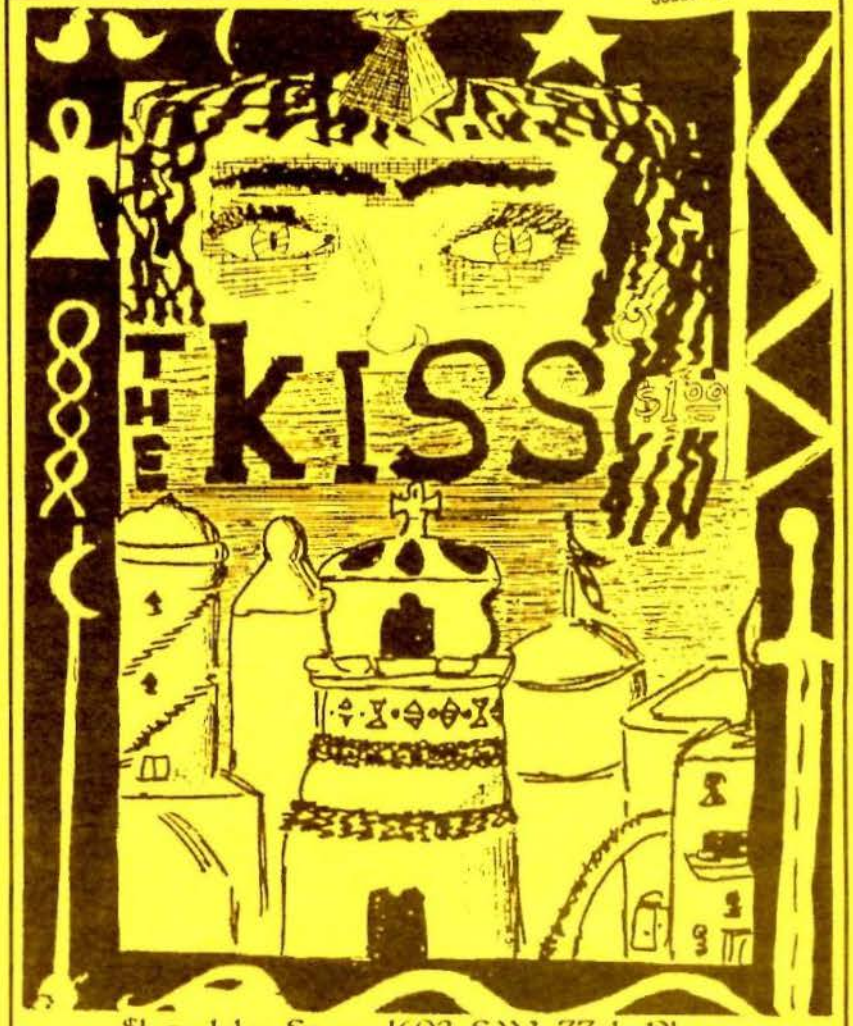

$1 to John Stone, 1602 S.W. 77th Place, Oklahoma City, OK 73159

HOW KEVIN TRAINED AT HOME TO BE A GUN PRO!

"KEVIN, HURRY UP! I NEED YOU TO WORK OVERTIME TONIGHT!"

AND SAID GOODBYE TO HIS GROUCHY OLD BOSS!

"MR. BURNS, ANY OTHER TIME WOULD BE OKAY, BUT I TOLD YOU LAST WEEK I'M LEAVING ON A HUNTING TRIP TONIGHT."

"I DON'T CARE... YOU EITHER STAY OR YOU'RE FIRED!"

THE NEXT DAY

"SORRY I WAS LATE MIKE... MR. BURNS MADE ME WORK OVERTIME. I HATE MY JOB! NEVER ANY TIME OFF, NEVER ENOUGH MONEY."

"WHY DON'T YOU APPLY FOR A BETTER JOB?"

"I'VE TRIED, BUT YOU NEED SPECIAL TRAINING, AND I DON'T HAVE TIME TO GO TO TECH SCHOOL OR COLLEGE."

"I KNOW, IT'S TOUGH. I WAS IN THE SAME BOAT ABOUT A YEAR AGO."

"REALLY? AS SUCCESSFUL AS YOUR GUN REPAIR BUSINESS IS, I'D HAVE THOUGHT YOU WENT INTO BUSINESS FOR YOURSELF YEARS AGO."

"NOT AT ALL! IN FACT YOU SHOULD LOOK INTO TRAINING TO BECOME A GUN PRO LIKE I DID. YOU'D BE A NATURAL."

"BUT HOW— WHEN I DON'T HAVE THE TIME?"

"DO WHAT I DID!"

"ABOUT A YEAR AGO I SAW A MAGAZINE AD THAT SAID I COULD TRAIN AT HOME TO BE A GUN PRO THROUGH ICS. IT SAID OVER 10 MILLION MEN & WOMEN HAD TRAINED THROUGH ICS... SO I MAILED IN THE COUPON FOR FREE FACTS!"

"...A FEW DAYS LATER I RECEIVED ALL THE FACTS BY MAIL. NO SALESMAN VISITED ME! NO PRESSURE AT ALL! THE FACTS TOLD ME HOW I REALLY COULD TRAIN AT HOME TO BE A GUN PRO. IT TOLD HOW ICS SUPPLIED EVERYTHING I NEEDED!"

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"I LEARNED WHERE TO BUY RIFLES, PISTOLS, SHOTGUNS AND ACCESSORIES AT WHOLESALE PRICES!"

"NO KIDDING!"

"WHY, I STARTED MAKING MONEY EVEN BEFORE I GRADUATED"

"...AND BECAUSE ICS SHOWED ME HOW TO APPLY FOR A FEDERAL FIREARMS LICENSE, I WAS ABLE TO ORDER GUNS AT LOW PRICES AND RESELL THEM TO EARN A LARGE PROFIT! NOW I HAVE A GOOD INCOME DOING WHAT I LIKE TO DO."

Federal Firearms License

"BEST OF ALL, I'M MY OWN BOSS!"

"MAYBE ICS IS THE WAY TO GO..."

"GET MOVING KEV, YOU'RE LATE!"

"MR. BURNS, I GOT A GREAT NEW JOB REPAIRING FIREARMS."

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